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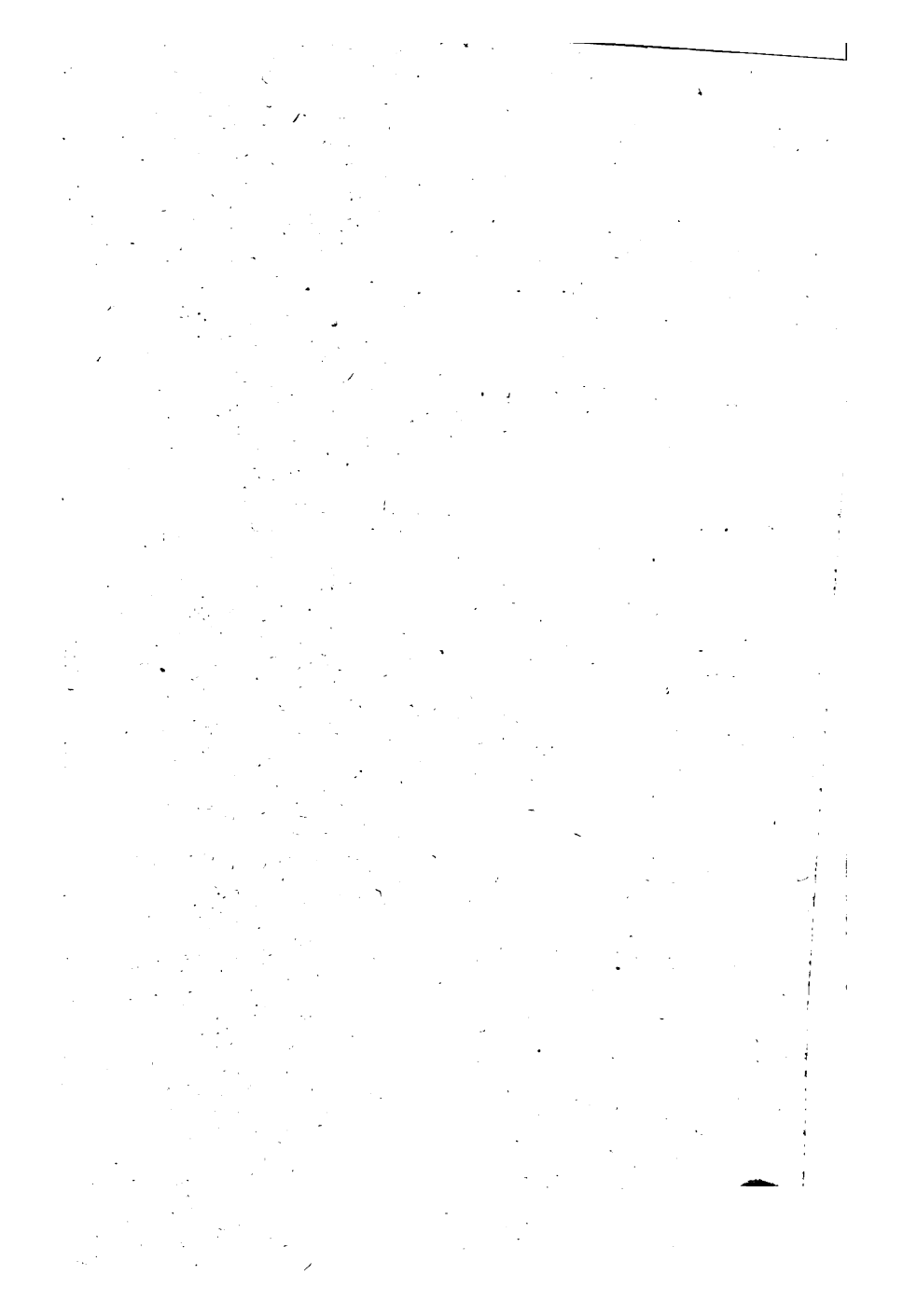
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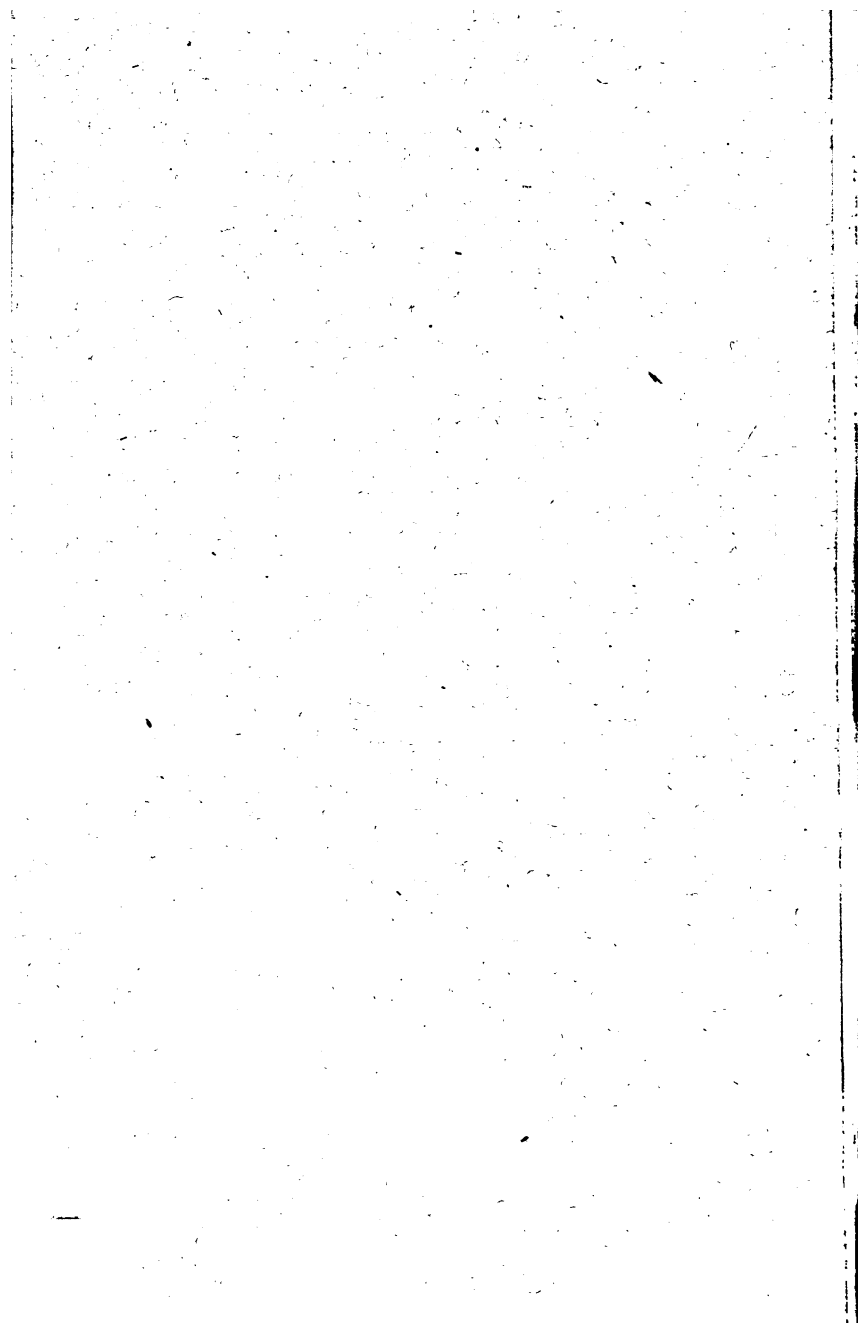
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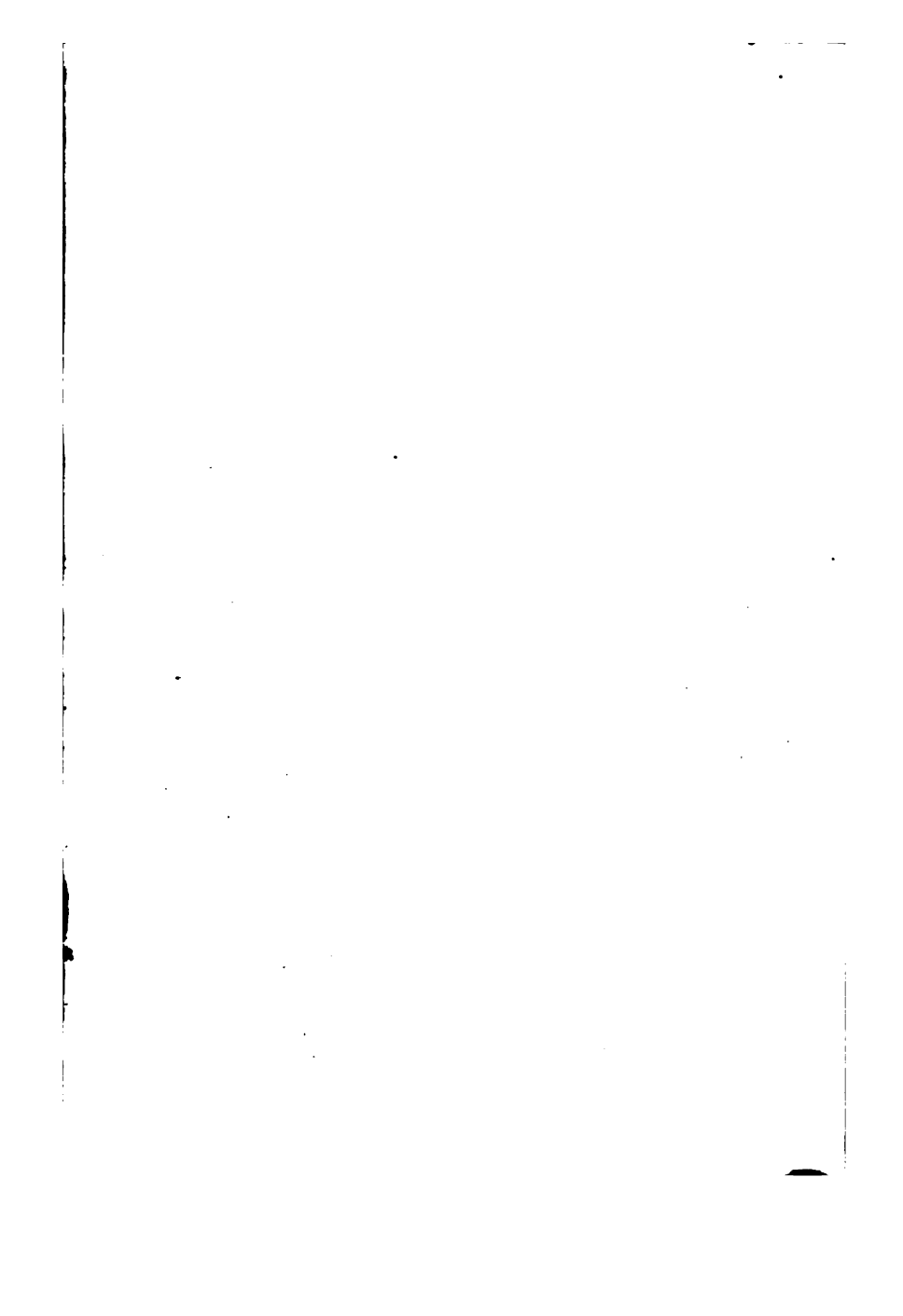






LECTURES
ON THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND.





Front



LECTURES
ON THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND

38180

BY
M. J. GUEST

WITH MAPS

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PREFACE.

IN these days of many books it seems necessary to give a few words of apology or explanation for venturing to add another to the number, especially on a subject already so well worked as to be almost trite. The only apology I can offer is, that in writing these Lectures I had no most distant intention of making a book. They were genuine Lectures, given week by week to a class of students in the College for Men and Women in Queen Square.

My pupils and I having wandered for some time in the intricate mazes of modern English Grammar, and finding the study somewhat barren, I proposed that we should turn our attention to English History, as likely to bring more interest, variety, and fruitfulness to our work. When I began to prepare the lessons, I found indeed innumerable books, but no book, no one book, which was not either too learned, too copious, too trivial, or too condensed for my exact purpose. I had neither power nor ambition to bring new materials, but I had to choose and shape afresh those already so bountifully provided, in order to reach my aim, which was to awaken a real and vivid interest in so noble a study as that of the life and growth of England through 2000 years.

Whilst owning obligations to so many, I may, perhaps, be permitted to express my special indebtedness to Mr. Green, not only for the constant guidance of his most original and delightful

'History of the English People,' but also for his valuable suggestions as to the authorities most helpful in the study of each period.

It seemed likely that others might have felt a need similar to my own, and that the Lectures might be useful to readers as well as hearers.

A point which, perhaps, needs explanation is the large number of quotations and extracts I have given. My reason for doing this was the great desire I felt to induce my pupils to read for themselves; to enjoy individually the same delight which I found in the old literature of our country; to live themselves back as far as possible into the very times of which we were speaking; to breathe the same air, think the same thoughts, feel the same feelings as our fathers had done.

To read or hear the facts, opinions, and inferences gleaned by another person from those old books is like reading travels in unknown lands, and seeing them with the traveller's eyes; but to study the old books themselves is like travelling in those lands and seeing them with our own. The very first advice my book is meant to enforce is—Read, read for yourselves.

If I may seem occasionally to abate somewhat of the respect due from a writer to his unknown readers, my excuse must be, that in preparing these Lectures for the press I have never been able to forget the kindly faces of the dear friends and pupils who surrounded me when they were first given, and who made my work so truly a labour of love.

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

LECTURE I.—PRE-HISTORIC ENGLAND.

Pre-historic England and its inhabitants. The palæolithic period—man and the contemporary animals. The neolithic period. The bronze period.

1. WE all love our country dearly ; and though, perhaps, we hardly know why, we feel proud of being English men and women. Sometimes we may be inclined to feel a little too proud of it, and to think ourselves a great deal better than the rest of the world ; but without boasting, we have some ground for honest pride ; without boasting, we may truly say that the English are free, brave, kindly, and just. Our country is beautiful and fertile ; our houses are full of comforts ; our shelves filled with noble books ; our children gathered into happy schools ; our sick into splendid hospitals. Our language is spoken over immense tracts of the earth's surface ; our ships are in every harbour ; and wherever we have power and influence we strive, in the main, "to break oppression, and set the captive free." There are many things we still wish to amend, many things we have to blush for ; but on the whole we have cause to be proud of our country and our name.

2. How did we come to be what we are ?

That is what the history of England teaches us ; and surely every son and daughter of England ought to know something about it.

3. Now when we are taught history, as, indeed, when we are told anything, we have a good right to ask, "Is it true ?" "How do you know ?" We generally consider that the very best reason we can have for being sure of anything is the evidence of our own eyes and senses. And this is certainly a very good ground of belief ; though, perhaps, a still better one is the evidence of the

eyes and senses of a wise and sensible observer, more experienced than ourselves. Of things which happened a long while ago we cannot have the evidence of our own eyesight; but we may have that of other men. If we get a sensible book or letter, written by a person on the spot when the thing happened, and there is nothing very improbable or unreasonable in the thing itself (even if that was hundreds of years ago), it is a very good reason for believing it. And the first written statement we have about our country is of that kind.

4. We are not concerned with that at present; but throughout these lectures, the grounds on which we believe the statements made, shall be explained, and if possible, the very words of the man who first told the tale, quoted. But this first lecture is occupied with matters which were not written down by any one living at the time, nor for thousands of years after; yet for all that the facts are true, and the proofs will appear as we go on. When Robinson Crusoe saw the foot-print in the sand, he did not want a book or a letter to tell him "there has been a man here."

5. Our History of England shall begin with an account of the very first men we know of who lived here. Strange as it may

**The first
period.**

sound, at that time there were no British Isles at all. England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland were all joined on to the mainland of Europe. (See map.) It is clear from the enormous quantities of ice we see in this map that it must have been much colder then than it is now. But though we have now no snowy mountains and no glaciers, England is in the same latitudes as Labrador, which is now as cold as Greenland and Iceland; and it is well known to physical geographers, that England was formerly in a somewhat similar condition.

6. In spite of the cold, there were a very great number of animals living in England at that time, which it would surprise us very much to find anywhere now out of the Zoological

**The
animals.**

Gardens. There were two kinds of elephants; two kinds of rhinoceroses; lions larger than those now living in Asia and Africa; bears equal in size to large horses; huge hyenas, hippopotamuses, bison, reindeer; very large stags and elks, besides many other smaller animals. Here you have a good right to ask the question, "How do you know?" The answer is that in a great many parts of England, in very old caves, and buried in very old gravel, the bones, horns, teeth, and tusks of these creatures have been found in large numbers. Learned men can tell one animal's bone or tooth from another as well as



To face page 2.

PHYSIOGRAPHY OF GREAT BRITAIN IN LATE PLEISTOCENE AGE.

Shaded area = Land now submerged; Dotted area = Region occupied by animals; Plain area = Region occupied by Glaciers.

we can tell the live creatures from each other. That is as good proof as Robinson Crusoe's footprint.

7. This seems to prove very clearly that England could not have been an island then. For how would all these great creatures have got over the sea? They could not have swum so far; and it is certain, even if men had come across in boats, they would not have wanted to bring these fierce wild beasts with them. Another thing is, that in many parts of the sea, between England and the Continent, fishermen are frequently dredging up bones and teeth of the same animals, which had lived and died in those parts when they were still dry land. And the same sorts of bones, tusks, &c., are found in great numbers on the mainland opposite to England. The sea is not very deep in any part of the German Ocean, and it is known by other proofs that sometimes land rises above the sea, and sometimes sinks below it.

8. Now amongst all these great, fierce, and strong animals, there was another remarkable animal living, much smaller than the lions and elephants, and apparently very helpless. The lions had enormous strength in claws and teeth; this poor creature had no claws, and very small teeth. The elephant and rhinoceros could crush an enemy with their weight; the elephant has also huge tusks. The hyæna had wonderfully powerful jaws. We all know about a "bear's hug." This poor thing had no tusks nor great heavy limbs. The bisons and elks had horns; this creature had none. Then, for the cold climate, many of the animals, even the elephants and rhinoceroses, had woolly or furry coats or manes. This creature had a bare skin, with no fur, no wool, and very little hair.

9. Which of all these creatures was likely to be crushed, devoured, and stamped out first?

Yet that very one is living, triumphant lord and master; and where are the lions and elephants, the bears and the hyænas? Gone for ever, every one of them; at any rate out of England, but many of them out of the whole world.

10. And now, how could this be, which is as wonderful as any fact in history, perhaps the most wonderful of all? That poor defenceless creature, though he had no horns nor claws, had what none of the others had—a marvellous power of *thought* and a marvellous power of *improvement*. No other animal could come near him in that. And by that—by thought and by intelligence—he subdued or survived all the others. Set in the midst of all these fierce enemies, and so helpless, he thought of what no brute has ever in the world

Man.

thought of—he thought of making a tool; something that he could use instead of all the weapons they had growing on them by nature. And though his first tools were very rude and rough, they were the wonderful beginning of all the innumerable things we have to help us in our works. Of course these wild savage men could not write to tell us of their tools, but we have just as good proof of them as we had of the elephants, &c., for they are dug up in multitudes in the very same places where the horns and tusks are found, and may be seen in the British and other Museums.

11. These earliest tools were naturally made of stones, bones, or horns. Men had not yet, nor for a very long time after, the idea of working in metals. They picked up a stone, and as well as they could, shaped it to a point, or a cutting edge; it could then be used as a hatchet, a knife, an awl, or an arrow-head. They used it, no doubt, for all sorts of purposes, especially for killing animals and cutting up the flesh. But they could also make a peaceable tool, such as we use now—namely, a needle. Their needles were made of the bone of reindeer or horses, carefully smoothed and rounded on fragments of sandstone, and the eyes neatly pierced with a sharp stone awl. As they had no thread, and knew nothing about spinning or weaving, they most likely wore clothes of skin, or the bark of trees, and threaded their needles for sewing them with the tendons of reindeer. Probably they used tendons also for bow-strings.

12. Another thing these savage men could do was to make a fire; for in the caves where they lived their old hearths have been discovered, and great quantities of charcoal. Most likely they roasted their meat, for they had not yet learned to make pots or saucepans. Nor had they learned to make houses; at least, all we can find out about their dwellings is, that they lived in caves when they could find them. As the hyænas, lions, and bears also liked the caves, we may be sure there were many fights who should get possession of them, and sometimes the men conquered, and sometimes the wild beasts. They had not yet learned to till the ground, but lived, as the lowest savages always do, only by hunting and fishing. They do not appear to have had any domestic animal, not even a dog.

13. But though so savage, they were fond of ornaments! The skeleton of one of these men has been found (though not in England) with *bracelets* of sea-shells round the arms and wrists, knees and ankles. They also adorned themselves with beads of coral and teeth of animals.

Stranger still; some of them could draw, or as we should rather say "engrave," or incise on pieces of bone or ivory. One of those ancient artists made a picture of an elephant, such as lived at that time, (now called a mammoth,) which had a long hairy coat and mane. As no such elephants exist now in the world, we should have thought this a fancy of the artist, had it not been for the discovery, in Siberia, of the frozen bodies of some of the very same animals, which had been buried in ice and frozen gravel for more thousands of years than one can say, with the fur and hair still in good preservation.

14. The people who lived before history was written, and of whom we know nothing but from what they left behind them, are named by us after the tools they used. Those just described are called "palæolithic," meaning "ancient stone," because their tools were principally made of stone; and at this period were very different from those of the next set of people we know anything about.

15. These are called "neolithic," meaning "new stone." They were greatly improved in many ways from the palæolithic men. For one thing, they could make their tools much better. They still made them of stones; but they had learned to shape and polish them beautifully, so that they were far more convenient and useful. By this time the great wild beasts had disappeared; instead of lions and elephants, we find with the polished stone implements the remains of dogs, pigs, oxen, sheep, and goats. Very likely Britain was an island by this time, but was larger than it is now; for there were great forests growing where there is now sea. On many parts of the coast there may still be seen, at low water, the relics of these forests, stumps of large trees, &c., sunk beneath the sea. Most of the country was covered with rocks, forest, and morass, which afforded shelter to elks, bisons, and reindeer. Reindeer moss is still to be found growing on some of the old commons near London; at Keston, for instance.

The second period.

16. The neolithic men had begun to be more civilized in their food. They seem to have eaten corn, and to have kept tame animals, instead of depending only on the chase. They ate beef, pork, and hares, also goats, horses, and dogs. Some learned men believe that they were cannibals, and ate human flesh also, but I do not think this can be proved. They had stone implements for crushing or grinding corn.

Improve-
ment.

They had also learnt two other great arts, though they were

still very rude : the making of pottery, and spinning and weaving. Pieces of rough pottery are often found in their caves, and some pieces of woven stuff, either of straw or of flax, and also stone spindle-whorls.

17. As far as we can judge, though they sometimes lived in caves, they had also learned to make a rude kind of house. It was most likely the neolithic men who raised many of the mounds or tumuli, of which there are great numbers in England, as well as in other parts of Europe, and which are generally tombs. Many of them have been opened, and skeletons found in them. Sometimes they contain a large, hollow chamber, with walls of big, rough stones, and a stone passage leading to it. Within the chamber may be found a number of skeletons, sitting or crouching just as they were buried. With the human beings were often buried the things which in life they valued most ; with warriors, their weapons ; with "ladies," as Sir John Lubbock calls them, their ornaments. "When a great man died, he was placed on his favourite seat ; food and drink were set before him ; his weapons placed by his side ; his house was closed—sometimes to be opened again when his wife or children joined him." So it seems that the tumuli may have been sometimes the real houses where the people had lived ; and sometimes they were, perhaps, imitations of them. Many people think that both these and the palæolithic men showed a belief in the immortality of the soul by providing their dead with necessities and pleasures. They probably thought that the weapons, food, &c., had a kind of spirit also, which would attend the spirit of the man after the death of his body.

The neolithic men were rather a small race—their skeletons show that they were about five feet five inches in height. The implements they could make were, among others, axes, wedges, chisels, hammers, poniards, and lance-heads. They could also make ornaments of gold.

18. After this, we come to another period, where another great advance is discernible. Men had by this time learned to work in metals. If you will think over all the implements

**The third
period.**

we have in common use, you will find we scarcely ever use anything made of stone, or bone, or horn. Almost all our tools and weapons are of metal—knives, ploughs, spades, swords, guns, needles, &c. It was a vast step forward to have found out how to work metals. Gold, which the neolithic people had employed for ornaments, is soft and easy to work, but of very little use either for sharpness or strength. Our tools

are, of course, principally made of iron, but that was far too difficult a metal to begin with. Copper seems to have been the first *useful* metal noticed by man. Iron is hardly ever found, except in ore; but copper is often found native, and, not being very hard, it can be beaten into shape. Iron is difficult to cast, but copper is very easy. It seems, however, to have been soon discovered that copper is more serviceable when mixed with a small quantity of tin. It is then called bronze; and bronze is the commonest metal found in ancient deposits. No implement of pure tin has ever been found, and hardly any of pure copper; but many thousands of bronze implements have been found in England, Ireland, and various parts of Europe; therefore this period is called the bronze period.

19. It is not certain whether the people who made the bronze implements were the descendants of the neolithic men, but it appears most probable that they were, and that they had gradually progressed. It is almost certain that we have many of their descendants among us still, and are even partly of their race ourselves.

20. These people seem to have quite given up living in caves, and had learnt to build houses. We do not know much about their houses from anything found in England, but those who lived in Switzerland made curious villages ^{Further} ~~improvement.~~ in the lakes, supported on strong piles, and so did those who lived in Wales and Ireland. In the Swiss lakes, round about the remains of the old piles, innumerable relics have been found, which tell us a good deal about the way of life of these people. We may even see the very food they used to eat.

21. They had a great deal of corn. Bushels of grain have been found, and even pieces of bread, or, rather, unleavened cakes about an inch thick; wild apples and pears, sometimes cut in halves or quarters, dried, and stored up for winter use; stones of wild plums, seeds of raspberries and blackberries, shells of hazel nuts. They had also domestic animals.

22. They could certainly weave linen; for many remains of linen tissue have been found in England among their bronze implements in some of the tumuli. But we know a great deal about their dress; for in Denmark the grave and coffin of a chief were opened, and his whole suit of clothes was found, as if he had been buried in them. The body was very much changed; the bones were turned into a kind of blue powder; the brain was the least changed of all. It was found at one end of the coffin, covered by a thick woollen cap. The body had been wrapped

in a coarse woollen cloth, a woollen shirt, two shawls with long fringes, leggings, and at the other end of the coffin were some fragments of leather, doubtless the remains of boots or shoes. We must own he had a very comfortable dress. In the coffin with him were found also another cap, a small comb, and a knife, packed in a little box, and by his side a bronze sword in a wooden sheath. This man had probably died late in the bronze period, for most generally in the earlier times the dead were burned, and the ashes collected in an urn.

23. As to the implements they made, the commonest are called "celts," which could be used for chisels, hoes, or axes, and which were cast in moulds of sand. They could also make very beautiful swords, with ornamental handles; daggers, spears, arrows, knives, and fish-hooks; and pretty bracelets, brooches, hair-pins, and buttons; for they had by no means out-grown the love of ornaments.

They had likewise improved very much in making pottery, and in decorating their jars and vases with different patterns. But they did not yet know how to make them flat at the bottom, so as to stand steady; they were mostly round, and had to be supported on rings of earthenware. Many of the large vases seem to have been used for storing nuts and other fruits for winter use.

It is supposed that these were the people who built Stonehenge, that mysterious circle of stones on Salisbury Plain, which has always been considered one of the wonders of England; but this is not quite certain.

24. When we come to what are called "historic" times, we find the people of whom we read had left off using stone and

bronze, and had their tools and weapons made of Iron. iron, as we have now. As iron is so much more difficult to work than bronze, this shows that men must have improved greatly in skill; but we know very little about the way they first took to it. Only it is believed that the first iron used was not smelted out of ore, but was some of the "meteoric" iron which sometimes falls from the sky, and which is almost pure metal. Some of the oldest names for iron we know of—the Greek and the Egyptian—mean the "starry" and the "sky-stone," or "stone of heaven." And when they had found how keen, how hard, how precious the heavenly metal was, they would soon think it worth while to take a great deal of trouble to purify that which they found mixed up with baser matters on earth.

LECTURE II.—THE ROMANS.

The Romans—their position in the world at the beginning of British history—their armies, navy, colonies, religion and morality; their laws—treatment of subject nations—habits and amusements—their slaves.

1. WHEN we come to "historic" times, that is, times in which people observed and wrote down the events which happened, we do not, at first, find that the inhabitants of Britain did so about themselves. But other and quite trustworthy people wrote of them.

2. It was mentioned in the last lecture that Great Britain and Ireland used to be joined to the mainland of Europe, though long before the historic period that had ceased to be the case. Still there has always been a very close connection between our isles and the Continent, and we can never understand the history of England without knowing something also about the state of Europe. The first people, from whose writings we learn anything about our country and those who lived in it, **The Romans.** were the Romans, who were for several hundred years the most important nation in the world.

3. They had conquered and made their own almost all the great old nations of which we know anything, except Assyria and Persia. The first civilized nation of **Conquests.** which we hear of is Egypt, which we read of as great and powerful in the first book of the Bible; we can see it also for ourselves in the great works they left behind—their pyramids, temples, and sculptures. That country the Romans had conquered. Travelling eastward we come to Palestine; from which we have our religion; our belief in one God, and our Bible. That too the Romans had conquered. We all know from the New Testament that the Jews "had no king but Cæsar." Then we come to Syria and Phœnicia. The people of those countries were the first great sailors and merchants, and from them too we get our letters of the alphabet. Try and realize that wonderful invention, and what we should be without it. To think of writing at all, making pictures or signs for words, is marvellous enough; but to invent an alphabet in which a few signs could be made to

represent all the thousands of words we use, seems absolutely astonishing. They were conquered. Next we come to Asia Minor, where there were beautiful cities, such as Ephesus ; full of art, and with an old history. Conquered too. Soon we arrive at Greece, with a still older and nobler history ; all full of heroes, of wonders, of poets, and of sages. Though we must not linger over it now, we may feel sure that, next to our religion, we have learnt more from the great Greeks than from any other people. Conquered too. Now we come to Italy itself, the lovely land. At the time we are speaking of, it does not occur to our minds as being beautiful, but as being strong ; but afterwards it became the home of painting and of poetry. Then France, or Gaul, as it was called, and Spain, which had not yet got their history, but had a famous future before them. And now we travel round again, along the north of Africa, "the parts of Libya about Cyrene," which the Romans after hard fighting had mastered ; and we see that their dominion bordered the whole of the great inland or Mediterranean Sea.

4. Now what sort of people were these who had gone forth in this way, conquering and to conquer ?

We cannot doubt, in the first place, that they were great soldiers. In those times fighting was considered a much better and more desirable thing than it is now. In very ancient history we find a state of perpetual war ; a state in which a man could only feel secure in the possession of his lands or his flocks as long as he had strength in his own right arm to defend them. It was not thought at all disgraceful, but very honourable, for a stronger man to surprise and take them for himself. The people of one family helped and befriended one another ; and as families increased in number they gradually grew into tribes, which hung together and supported each other ; and the successful tribes, again, by degrees grew into nations ; and it was the natural state of things for them to be at war with all other families, or tribes, or nations.

5. The Romans had begun in a very small way, by building a rough little village, which in the course of years grew into the stately city of Rome ; while they themselves grew into the great conquerors and masters we have seen. It is supposed to have been about 750 years from the foundation of the city to the birth of Christ, which occurred soon after the time when Britain first took her place in written history. Some of the wiser of them had now begun to think it time to stop in the career of conquest, though they did add some other provinces afterwards.

6. Of course they wanted huge armies to win and defend all this; and their army was looked on as more important than anything else. The officers, as with us, were gentlemen; the common soldiers were of the lower orders, and recruited in all, even the most distant, provinces; but they liked better to take them from the north than from the south, because they were braver and stronger. It was considered a great honour to be a soldier; much more honourable than to be a mechanic or a peasant. Every soldier took a most solemn oath, which was called a "sacrament;" so solemn was it that Christians have taken that name for the sacred ceremonies in which they pledge themselves to follow Christ. The soldier swore never to desert his standard, to submit his own will to the command of his leader, and to sacrifice his life for the empire. The standard was a golden eagle, which was worshipped as a god; and it was thought impious as well as disgraceful to desert the eagles. The soldiers were well paid, but very strictly disciplined. They were, if not at war, constantly exercised, and in exercising their arms were twice as heavy as the real ones. They were taught to march, run, leap, and swim; and thus became very hardy and active. Their generals would not only look on, but take part in the exercise themselves.

7. The whole army was divided into legions, each of which was like a little army, complete in itself, and comprising all sorts of soldiers. There were heavy-armed foot-soldiers, with their helmets, breastplates, greaves, shields, spears, and two-edged swords. Each legion had also a band of cavalry, with lighter arms. There were men from the conquered provinces, who had not been trained and drilled like the regular soldiers, but who fought in their own fashion, under Roman officers, and who were called auxiliaries. The legion, also, had its own artillery; of course not cannon, but battering-rams, and machines for discharging great stones, which were used in sieges before gunpowder was invented. There were perhaps 12,500 men to make up a legion, and in the palmy days of Rome she possessed thirty of these mighty forces. They were encamped along the banks of great rivers, as the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates, and on the other borders of the empire, to keep off the barbarians who were swarming outside.

8. They were not very great on the sea, and their navy was by no means equal to their army. The Mediterranean was the only sea they wished to command, and they seldom thought of venturing outside the narrow straits which led

The Army.

The Navy.

to the great ocean beyond. They believed that their divine hero, Hercules, had been through those straits in performing some of his great deeds, and had set up a pillar on each side in remembrance of the feat; and though they were really frightened by the sea, they tried to lay their fears on the ground of religion. For one man, Drusus, did try to make some way beyond the "pillars," and to find out something more about Hercules; "but," says one of their wisest historians, Tacitus, "the roughness of the ocean withstood him, nor would suffer discoveries to be made about itself no more than about Hercules. Thenceforward the enterprise was dropped. Nay, more pious and reverential it seemed to *believe* the marvellous feats of the gods than to know and to prove them."

9. We do not know how much Tacitus himself believed of those marvellous feats; for when we try to learn about their religion, we seem to find that at the time he wrote there were two religions prevailing: one for the common and ignorant people and the women, and another for the well-educated. The first one was, by this time, real and gross idolatry. Not that it had been so from the beginning; for it seems, in the earliest times, to have arisen by giving names to natural things, as the sun, the sky, the dawn, and the wind; and by degrees forgetting what those names meant, fancying that they were the names of real people, and at last worshipping them as gods and goddesses. The principal god was Jupiter. That name really meant "the Sky-Father," or Father in Heaven; but this first beautiful meaning was now almost lost, and many of the tales told of Jupiter were very degrading; as they were also of the crowds of other gods and goddesses, which had once been only thought of as clouds, or dew, or breezes, but of whom they now had images in their temples, fashioned like men and women.

10. The wiser and more thoughtful of the people longed for something better and truer than this. They could not believe, and would not believe, tales in which the gods are much worse than good men, or, indeed, than most bad men. They had conquered the Jews some time before this, and it is very interesting to read what Tacitus says about them. He speaks of them, on the whole, with great contempt and disdain, but he is much struck (for he mentions it several times) with their *spiritual* religion. "The Jews know but one Deity, to be conceived and adored by the mind only. For profane and unhallowed they hold all such as, out of materials mortal and perishing, use to fashion their gods after the likeness of men; they hold that the

Divine Being, eternal and supreme, is incapable of all change, incapable of ever ending." The same man tells us that the first Roman who subdued the Jews, "exercising the rights of a conqueror, entered their temple. Thenceforward it was rumoured about that within it he had found no images of the gods, but the residence of the Deity, void of any."

11. Some of the wiser then among the Romans longed for a religion more like this, and one which they could believe; for they could not be content with a mere dreary unbelief. They wanted something spiritual, and they wanted a pure morality. Some of them felt and wrote as nobly as Christians could. One of them, Epictetus, who lived not long after the time I am describing, and who had a very unhappy outward life, wrote these beautiful words:—"I will say unto God, Did I ever find fault, or accuse Thy government of affairs? I was sick, because Thou wouldest; others also have been sick; but I willingly. I was poor, because Thou wouldest; and therefore joyful in my poverty. I never was in authority, because Thou wouldest not; and Thou knowest that, therefore, I never desired authority. Did I ever appear before Thee with a sad and dejected countenance, as one who had suffered a repulse, or been disappointed of his hopes? Behold, I am ready to obey whatever Thou shalt enjoin. If it be to quit the stage, I go. But, before I leave the world, I render to Thee my most humble thanks that Thou hast been pleased to admit me into this theatre, to be an admirer and spectator of Thy works."

12. Many others, however, were mere infidels. But even the philosophers generally conformed outwardly to the religion of the people. They were very tolerant of other religions, and never interfered with that of the people they **Toleration.** conquered, unless it prevented them from obeying the laws and living orderly lives. In fact, they were quite ready to adopt and believe in the gods of other nations as well as their own. No doubt this, and their dissatisfaction with the old religion, prepared the way for their accepting Christianity. We know there were a great many Christians in Rome even in St. Paul's time, and that that religion, in spite of persecutions, finally took entire possession of the Roman world.

13. The Romans were the wisest and best makers of laws the world had ever seen. Indeed, all modern Europe has learnt more or less from them, and many nations are **Laws.** still governed almost entirely by the Roman law; though England,

I believe, less than any. They ruled the people they conquered by the same laws. We can see in the New Testament how in general the Roman governors were on the side of justice against the tyrannous bigotry of the Jews. Pontius Pilate would have liked to save Christ; he knew that He had done nothing worthy of death, and it was only because he was such a coward that he gave way. And the various Roman governors and officers of whom we read in the Acts were, on the whole, far more just and fair than anybody else. "It is not the manner of the Romans," said Festus, "to deliver any man to die before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crimes laid against him." And we remember how when the Jews at Jerusalem saw the chief captain and the Roman soldiers "they left beating of Paul."

14. To be a Roman citizen was a great honour and privilege. In our days, to be a citizen, to have the freedom of the city of London, is considered a great distinction, and is given in special cases to those who have done some great thing. The Romans were very liberal in granting this favour. First, they gave it to all the free-men of Rome; then to all the dwellers in the province of Latium, in which Rome stood; then to all Italy. Afterwards it was given to many people and cities in conquered provinces. St. Paul, "a Hebrew of the Hebrews," was a Roman too. (Acts xvi. 37.)

15. The Romans were in one thing very like the English. They had great skill and aptitude for colonizing. Some Colonies. people have the power of taking root in other lands and making a home there, taking their language, customs, and religion with them. In modern days no people can do this like the English. In old days the Greeks did it, and after them the Romans. It was for the interests of the colonists to live in friendship with the natives; they were farmers and merchants, and so gained a great influence for their nation, besides what was acquired by fighting and conquering. In after times they had nine colonies in Britain, some of which are large cities now, as London, Bath, Chester, and Lincoln, &c. By degrees the conquered and civilized people of the provinces were promoted to honour and trust; they were not only allowed to be citizens, but to command legions, and to have seats in the senate (or House of Parliament of Rome). Afterwards some of them even rose to be emperors; but at this period there were no emperors; the government had been republican for hundreds of years. The conquered provinces also learnt to speak Latin, like their con-

querors. In some of these countries the language is still a modified Latin, as in Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and some others. All these languages are called *Romance*, because they all came from the Romans.

16. Their language is a grand and beautiful one, and they have left us many noble books of history, poetry, geography, and philosophy. So we see that the well-educated among them cared for much the same sort of things that we do. They were fond of fine buildings, too, stately churches or temples, arches, theatres, &c. Their houses were very handsome, and ornamented with pictures and statues. Some of them, though not the finest, were buried under the ashes of Vesuvius, and kept in beautiful preservation for 1800 years, with the paintings still on the walls. There is a very good copy or model of one of them in the Crystal Palace.

**Tastes and
habits.**

17. They were even fonder of clean water than we are, and spent immense sums of money in bringing it to their towns and making delightful baths. They were like us, again, in another way—they were great travellers. We make railroads; they made roads. Some of those they made are still existing; for, in general, whatever work they did was thorough and good; we have some of them even in our own country.

18. The ladies (like all other ladies in the world, I suppose) were fond of fine clothes and ornaments, and the Senate or Parliament tried to put some stop to their extravagance. They wore silk dresses when they could get them; but a pound's weight of silk in those days was worth a pound's weight of gold. It was considered an ornament to a lady to wear silk, but a disgrace to a man. Pearls and diamonds they also sought after; indeed, it was partly to look after pearls that they came to Britain, though, it seems, they did not find any worth having. They got them from Cape Comorin, as we do.

19. The Romans, from being such great travellers and colonists, became acquainted with many fruits and herbs which did not grow naturally in Italy and other parts of Europe, and these they brought home and planted in their gardens and orchards. It was they who first planted in Europe apricots, peaches, and oranges. They also planted vines in many places where they had never been heard of before, but where they still flourish and produce some of our best wine, as in Burgundy. They studied too how to feed cattle better, and brought different sorts of grasses and other herbs from foreign parts, such as luzern, which we use now.

20. Now so far I have described a brave, honourable, and on the whole a just nation (allowing for the universal feeling about *war* at that time), and which really did great good in the world; but there were some things about them which were very terrible, and wrought great harm and misery.

21. The first is, that they had immense numbers of *slaves*. These clever, rich, and elegant gentlemen and ladies were waited

Slaves. on by innumerable slaves. We must remember that in the old and warlike times, with which most histories begin, if the conquerors did not kill the conquered they always made slaves of them; that was sometimes from mercy and pity, and sometimes for convenience. So that in all old histories, in our own too, we shall find there was a large class of slaves. We think very little of them; but we ought, in comparing old times with ours (which we often do, to the disparagement of our own), to remember this poor dumb class, who toiled and suffered to give leisure and ease to their masters, of whose grand deeds and thoughts we love to read.

22. A slave could be bought for about three shillings, when an ox cost tenpence; and what with buying and conquering, and the slaves themselves multiplying, the Romans had at this time a vast number of them; one single family possessed 400. Among these, strange as it may sound to us, there were some very well-educated and superior people. Some were doctors, some were tutors to the children, some were artists. Probably this class of slaves were generally treated with great kindness and respect, but the lower ones were often used very cruelly. When they got old and useless the masters used constantly to put them on an island in the river, and leave them to perish. The ladies would sometimes tear their faces, or pierce their flesh with the long pins of their brooches. One slave was crucified for killing and eating a favourite tame bird. If a master was murdered there was a law that all the slaves in the house, unless in chains or quite helpless through illness, should be put to death. Still we must hope that these great cruelties were the exception, and not the rule. We all remember the "centurion's servant (or slave) who was dear to him;" but where such things were even possible, we are sure that they must have been a very oppressed and down-trodden race.

The philosophers took the part of the slaves; and still more so, in after times, did Christianity, which taught that "there is neither bond nor free," and that all men have a Master in heaven.

23. As for the amusements of the Romans, it is almost incredible how horrible they were. One of their great delights was to see wild beasts tear each other to pieces. **Amusements.** They would have bears and bulls; but also elephants, tigers, giraffes, even crocodiles and serpents. Three or four hundred bears might be killed in a single day; or they would have 400 tigers fighting with bulls and elephants. On one very great occasion no less than 5000 animals perished.

It is easy to imagine how brutalizing all these ferocious sights must have been, but there were others still worse than these. Sometimes they would have men, slaves brought from foreign lands, to fight with the wild beasts. They would dress criminals in the skins of animals, and throw them to bulls, which were maddened by red-hot irons. Even women would sometimes fight, and one is said to have killed a lion. Some of the great theatres where these dreadful "games" took place are still existing. There may be seen the places where the grand people sate, enjoying the sight; and the seats rising up behind them where the common people sate, enjoying it too; and down below the dens where the poor beasts, and the cells where the poor slaves were kept. The largest of these theatres is called the Coliseum, at Rome, and would hold more than 80,000 people.

24. At other times, instead of wild beasts, they would have men fighting with one another. These men were called "Gladiators" or "Swordsmen." There were many thousands of them, who were trained very carefully to kill one another for the pleasure of the lookers-on. Lord Byron wrote these tender and indignant lines about a dying gladiator, which fill our hearts with a pity the Romans never felt.

"I see before me the Gladiator lie;
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone;
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

"He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away:
He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday!"

25. If it makes us shudder to hear of these dreadful and piteous scenes, what can have been the effect on those who looked at them; those who sate safe on their raised seats, shouting with delight, while their victims were struggling and sinking for their amusement? How it must have hardened their hearts and killed their sympathy! And how wise is Solomon's counsel: "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this."

LECTURE III.—THE BRITONS.

The ancient Britons—their language, religion, education, commerce, and arts—their relations on the Continent—their connection with the great Aryan family—their descendants in the present day.

1. It was about fifty-five years before the birth of Christ that Julius Cæsar, one of the greatest of the Roman generals, was in France, or Gaul, as it was then called, with an army. He was one of the most famous of the Romans; not only a victorious soldier, but also in other ways a wonderful man. Some time afterwards he was killed in Rome, as we may read in Shakespeare's play; but we have nothing to do with that now. What most concerns us is that he himself wrote long and very interesting histories of his own wars, of which we will read some extracts. You will observe he always speaks of himself in the third person; so he does generally in Shakespeare's play.

B.C. 55.
Julius
Cæsar.

2. The people of Gaul, though conquered, were not very submissive, and often gave the Romans trouble. When they were rebelling they used to get help from some neighbours, who were even fiercer and more turbulent than themselves. These neighbours came from over the sea; but in some parts the strip of sea was so narrow that the Romans could look across from Gaul to the land opposite, from whence they came, as we can now look from Calais to Dover. Now these Romans, being great fighters, great travellers, very fond of geography, and very fond of exploring, must have found it a great temptation to see that land dimly in the distance. Was it an island? was it part of the Continent? who lived there? what grew there? At any rate these troublesome barbarians must be put down.

Gaul and
Britain.

3. Before this time there had been sometimes merchants coming and going. There was one thing to be got in Britain which was very rare everywhere else, and, indeed, is so still—tin. Nearly all the tin in Europe until quite lately came from Cornwall and the isles of Scilly, though a great deal is now brought from Banca, in India. It is almost certain that the "bronze"

people, who lived not only in England, but also were scattered over great part of Europe, got the tin to mix with their copper from Cornwall. Most probably, also, the Phœnicians, who were the great traders of old, knew something of the southern parts of Britain, for though the Romans were afraid of passing the "pillars of Hercules," the Phœnicians had founded a colony at Cadiz, on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean; and, as they were good sailors, those colonists might easily have found their way to Cornwall.

4. But by this time the trade in tin, and perhaps in skins also, was carried on between the ports of Gaul and Britain. What sort of people were living here at this, which we may call the beginning of the historical period, though not yet of the history of England?

5. The last people we heard of were those who made bronze implements. The inhabitants of Britain had now learnt to use iron. That is far more difficult to work than copper and tin; so they must have improved greatly in skill, or they must have been another race of people. We will leave that question for the present, and find out what we can of the people, the Britons themselves.

6. We learn this not from any writings of their own, but from what the Romans tell us. They, it would seem, took as much interest in the matter as we do in Fi-ji, or any of the remote islands and countries we have annexed. Just as Captain Cook wrote accounts of the Sandwich Islands, so did the Romans about Britannia. And, as we have several of their books, or parts of them, remaining, we, at least, know what they can tell us.

7. We soon find out that the people were very brave, fierce, and quarrelsome; though Julius Cæsar says that those who lived

in Kent were the most civilized. As they were the nearest to France, they had perhaps learnt politeness from the French. He tells us that the island was well peopled, and full of houses, built after the manner of the Gauls. We learn from another Roman, Strabo, what sort of houses the Gauls had. They were constructed of poles and wattled or hurdle-work; round, and with lofty, tapering, and pointed roofs. They do not seem to have had any windows or chimneys, and must have looked rather like huge bee-hives. A very delightful old English writer, Fuller, who tells the history of Christianity in our island, describes the difference between a common house and a palace. The "palace," though also built of hurdle-work,

was white, "because the rods whereof it was made were unbarked, having the rind stripped off, which was then counted gay and glorious."

8. Cæsar talks about villages and towns, but he says their towns were not much like ours. "What they call a town is a tract of woody country, surrounded by a wall or high bank, and a ditch, for the security of themselves and their cattle against the incursions of enemies."

9. The more civilized people, in the south, understood something about agriculture, manuring the land, and storing up corn in underground granaries. None of the Britons would eat hares, fowls, or geese; but there were plenty of cattle all over the country, though at this time there were neither donkeys, cats, nor rats. The inland and more ignorant people never sowed their land or grew any corn, but lived by their flocks and herds, and by hunting. They wore coats of skins, and had their own skins painted blue with the juice of a plant. This, Cæsar says, "makes them look dreadful in battle."

Food.

10. However, they were not mere savages, as they could work in iron, could make wheeled carriages, and were, in particular, very clever at basket-work. They could even make boats of wicker, covered with the skins of animals, and very good wooden boats also. A great many ancient boats and canoes have been dug up in different places, especially at Glasgow. Some of them were formed of a single oak stem, hollowed out by blunt tools, probably stone axes, aided by the action of fire. Some were cut beautifully smooth, and must have been made with tools of some metal. The first of these, most likely, belonged to the stone period, and the next to the bronze. Then there was one regularly built of planks, with ribs, and with prow and stern like ours. This was probably of the iron or British age; it had been partly fastened with metal nails, but, as these had quite disappeared, we do not know if they were bronze or iron. It must have been very interesting to the excavators to see the improvement the boat-builders had made as time went on.

Boats.

11. Besides the domestic animals, there were a great many wild ones, which have now quite passed away from our islands; as the brown bear, the wolf, the wild boar, and the beaver (the town of Beverley is named from these beavers which used to live there). All these still live wild in other parts of the world, and it is less than 200 years since the last wolf was killed in Scotland.

State of the country.

12. Imagine this country as it was then, compared with what it is now. Even in the most quiet and remote parts now there are peaceful fields with corn or grass, and bordered with hedges; there are firm roads, safe foot-paths with gates or stiles; churches, schools, pleasant houses and cottages, with their gardens and orchards. Many of the cottages are not even yet what they ought to be, but they are "palaces" indeed to those damp and dark wattled huts standing in the midst of wild forests and marshes, undrained, and full of fierce, wild creatures.

13. What had they to take the place of our churches and schools? The same Roman general, Julius Cæsar, tells us about their religion. He had been a great deal in Gaul, and says that the people there had the same religion as the Britons; but Britannia was looked on as a sort of holy place, and those who wished to learn the religion most perfectly travelled there for instruction.

14. This religion was sometimes called Druidism, and the priests were Druids, who, besides attending to sacred affairs, were judges of the people, and had charge of the education of the children. Cæsar says they worshipped Jupiter, Apollo, and the other gods of the Romans, but they certainly did not bear those names. He does not say much about images, but they must have had a great many, for one of themselves, Gildas, writing some hundreds of years later, after they had long been Christians, says that "they almost surpassed in number those of Egypt," and might in his day (A.D. 546) "be still seen mouldering within or without the deserted temples, with stiff and deformed features, as was customary." Julius Cæsar goes on to say that they thought a great deal of human sacrifices, and though they chose as victims, by preference, robbers and other criminals, yet, if there were none of these to be had, the innocent were often made to suffer. He says, "Some prepare huge images of osier-twigs, into which they put men alive, and, setting fire to them, those within expire amidst the flames." It is now believed that these "images" were more like great pictures or outlines drawn on the ground, with osier fences around them, where the victims were burnt.

15. They had a great reverence for some natural objects, especially running streams, trees, and serpents. The tree they most honoured was the oak, and, still more than the oak, the mistletoe which grew on it. Though mistletoe often grows upon apple trees, it is very uncommon upon oaks, and whenever a plant of it was found on an oak tree there was a grand ceremony.

A solemn procession was formed, two white bulls were sacrificed, and the sacred plant cut with a knife of gold. It was considered to have wonderful and mysterious powers, and to cure diseases. Perhaps it really had some medical effect, for it has been used, even in modern times, as good for epilepsy.

16. The Druids kept a part of their religion secret, as too sacred for the common people. It was often the case with old religions that there were certain mysteries belonging to them which only a few were allowed to know. Some people think that there were Druidesses as well as Druids; but if there were, they were not told the secret doctrines; it appears to have been thought that women could not keep a secret. Thus the Druids seem to have been a kind of magicians. In an old translation of the Bible into a branch of their language (the Irish), the magicians of Egypt are called the "Druids of Egypt," and the wise men from the East are called Druids also.

17. Though their religion was in parts so cruel, and in parts so superstitious, they had some very good and great ideas. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and considered that this faith "contributes greatly to exalt men's courage by disarming death of its terrors." They studied astronomy and "the nature of things," and taught their pupils a great deal of history and poetry.

18. As to their medicines, besides the mistletoe they used other herbs; but they mixed up with the real use of the plant a great many magical ideas. There were most minute and fantastic rules about the gathering of these plants. The person who collected them was sometimes to be dressed in white, or to have his feet bare; sometimes he must use his right hand, and sometimes his left. Sometimes he had to go by moonlight, or when some particular star might be seen in the sky; at other times he might go in the sunshine. Sometimes he would have to fast before he might venture to touch them. Some of these superstitions have gone on through many centuries of Christianity. Even now we occasionally hear of "wise" men and women in the country working marvellous cures, and who practise something very like them.

19. And now comes the question, Who were these people? and where did they come from?

To answer that, we have to go back a long, long way; to the very beginnings and roots of history. It has been already perceived that by history I do not mean mere stories of fighting, or the names and dates of kings and

Origin.

queens, but the history which tells of the life of man; the progress he has made in religion, in thought, in literature, or the writing of wise and good books; in art, or in beautiful building, painting, sculpture, and music; and in wise and just government, in law and freedom. Most of these we can learn

The Aryan family.

best from the history of certain nations in Europe, some of which were mentioned in the last lecture—Greece, Italy, France, Germany, and England. All of these have had a great deal to do with each other; all have done much in helping on the great progress of humanity; some in this way, and some in that. These nations belong to one great family, which is called the Aryan family, and they are all blood-relations to one another.

20. It may, perhaps, be asked how we know this. It is their languages which teach it. If people living very far away from one another talk the same language, we feel almost

Language.

sure that there must have been a time when they, or their fathers, all belonged to each other. For example, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean there is a great nation which talks English. If we did not know history at all, we could not help concluding, from that alone, either that we came from the Americans, or the Americans from us; or else, that we both descended from one stock. In this instance we know all about it from books of history, which tell us that the forefathers of the Americans were Englishmen who settled in America a few hundred years ago, and whose descendants have, of course, talked and written English ever since. As this was only what, in history, we call a short time ago, the American English is almost exactly like ours, though a few little differences have already sprung up; for they use some words and expressions which we do not, and do not always pronounce their words quite as we do; but if we had been entirely separated from them many more centuries than we have, and the separation had taken place before there were written or printed books, the differences would have been very much greater. Perhaps we might not have even been able to understand each other if we attempted to talk together, but we should still have had a great number of words alike. Suppose they had such words as father, mother, daughter, brother, sister, king, to have, to be, to build, to plough, the numbers one, two, three, &c., like ours, should we not feel that this could not have happened by chance, but that some long time ago our fathers must all have lived together, and used these words together?

21. Now it is a most curious and wonderful fact that such

words as these, and many others, do really belong in common to all those nations before mentioned, and even to other nations very far away from us now, the Persian and the Indian ; though they are not all spelt or even pronounced exactly alike. Let us look at a few of these common words in some of the principal languages of Europe, and observe how much they resemble each other.

ENGLISH.	LATIN.	GREEK.	GERMAN.
Father	Pater	Pater	Fater
Mother	Mater	Mētēr	Mutter
Daughter		Thugatēr	Tochter
Night	Noct-	Nukt-	Nacht
One	Un(us)	En	Ein
Three	Tres	Treis	Drei
Eight	Oct(o)	Okt(ō)	Acht

Some of our common words are very oddly spelt, and not at all according to the sound when they are spoken, as daughter, eight, and night. But in German and Greek the letters which seem useless in English are really sounded ; and in the oldest of all the Aryan languages, an Indian one called Sanskrit, these words have nearly the same letters in them. The Sanskrit word for daughter, which is thousands of years old, is "duhitar," and the Sanskrit word for eight is "aght."

22. These are only a few specimens, but there are really many more ; in fact, there is quite reason enough to convince learned men that all these nations, many of them living so far apart, and seeming so very different from each other, must have grown from one stock or family, which is called the Aryan family. The word "Aryan," as far as can be made out, means "one who ploughs or tills."

23. There was a time then, long, long ago, when the forefathers of these nations, the Indians and Persians, Greeks, Italians, Germans, Slavs, French, and English, and others, were all one people, speaking one language, and living together somewhere in Central Asia. But after a time there was a great separation. One after another they parted off—some east, some west. Some went to India ; some came to Europe. And they did not generally come into uninhabited lands, but into countries where there were people already living. These they either destroyed or drove into the farthest corners they could. Those who went to India pushed the old inhabitants

The
dispersion.

down southwards. Those who came into Europe, and from whom we descend, pushed the old inhabitants westwards.

23. It appears that the first of the Aryans who came into Europe were a tribe or race called Celts; they certainly came farther west than any of the others. They

The Celts. settled themselves in parts of Italy, parts of Spain, in France, in England, Ireland, and Scotland. These were the people whom the Romans found in Britannia, and who are called the Britons; and we know that they were an Aryan race by their language. There are plenty of people living still who speak the same language (though the English do not), viz., the Welsh, the Irish, the Highland Scotch, and some others.

24. These Celts found in Spain, France, and Britain other people already settled, who were most likely the *bronze* or the *neolithic* people. No doubt they killed most of them, but some are believed to be living in Europe still, in the Basque provinces, in a northern province of Spain; and their language, which is not an Aryan language at all, is most likely the same old language which the makers of the bronze implements spoke.

25. It must now be explained why it is supposed that some of us English are partly descended from these old races. It is because there are two types or kinds of people in England, as well as in other parts of Europe, who are very different indeed from one another in appearance. One tall, large, fair-com-

**The two
races.**

plexioned, with light or red hair, and blue or grey eyes; the other short, dark-complexioned, with dark hair, and dark eyes. They are so unlike each other, that if we were not quite accustomed to them we should almost be obliged to think they belonged to different nations. Of course now we have all sorts of connecting links: some dark people are tall; some fair people are short; but if we went along the eastern coast of England, and noticed the people born and bred there, we should find nearly all of them tall, fair, and blue-eyed; while in South Wales we should find nearly all short, wiry, and dark. The Romans found just the same when they came to England. Tacitus says some had large limbs and red hair; some had tawny complexions and dark, frizzly hair. Those who have studied the subject say that the Aryan people—the Celts—were the tall, fair ones; and the bronze or neolithic people, whose land they took, were the short, dark ones. The neolithic men; it will be remembered, were only about five feet five inches high, as is shown by their skeletons; their sword-handles, too, are small. And the Basque people are mostly dark and small.

26. Evidently in Britain the Celts so thoroughly conquered the old inhabitants, that though they did not destroy them all, they quite put an end to their old speech, and when the Romans came they found no language spoken except different varieties of Celtic. But we have not even yet arrived at the people whom we must call our real, true forefathers. They were far away from Britain all this time.

Note to *Boats*, p. 21: Cæsar had observed these boats, and was not too proud to copy them himself afterwards, in his wars in Spain.

LECTURE IV.—THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN.

Julius Cæsar in Gaul. Invasion of Britain. Agricola. Progress of civilization. Introduction of Christianity.

1. BEFORE the time when Julius Cæsar came we have no written history of Britain. But, a very long time after he went away, people began to make up a history of the Britons. That, we feel sure, could not be a true one, because the writers had no means of knowing what had happened, or the names and exploits of kings who had lived and died (if they ever lived at all) hundreds of years before. There may, indeed, have been *traditions*; that is, things told by word of mouth from one to another, from father to son; but if we consider how stories get changed in repeating, even in the course of a day or two, we shall see that we cannot put any faith in those old tales. I mention them, partly, because King Lear and his daughters are said to have lived in the times they describe; and their story is very interesting, though almost certainly it is not true as history.

2. But we will now see what Julius Cæsar himself tells us about his first coming to Britain. "Though but a small part of

B C 55.
The Roman
invasion.

the summer now remained, for in those regions, Gaul, stretching very much to the north, the winters begin early, Cæsar nevertheless resolved to pass over into Britain, having certain intelligence that in all his wars with the Gauls the enemies of the commonwealth had ever received assistance from thence. He indeed foresaw that the season of the year would not permit him to finish the war; yet he thought it would be of no small advantage if he should but take a view of the island, learn the nature of the inhabitants, and acquaint himself with the coasts, harbours, and landing-places, to all which the Gauls were perfect strangers; for almost none but merchants resort to that island, nor have even they any knowledge of the country, except the sea-coast, and the parts opposite to Gaul. Having, therefore, called together the merchants from all parts, they could neither inform him of the largeness of the island, nor what or how powerful the nations were that inhabited it, nor of their

customs, arts of war, or the harbours fit to receive large ships. For these reasons, before he embarked himself, he thought proper to send C. Volusenus with a galley to get some knowledge of these things, commanding him as soon as he had informed himself in what he wanted to know to return with all expedition."

3. When Volusenus returned, giving what information he could (which was not much, for he had been afraid to leave his ship, or trust himself in the hands of the barbarians), Cæsar made all preparations for the crossing. "He weighed anchor about one in the morning, and about ten o'clock reached the coast of Britain, where he saw all the cliffs" (the tall, white cliffs of Dover) "covered with the enemy's forces. The nature of the place was such that, the sea being bounded by steep mountains, the enemy might easily launch their javelins on us from above. Not thinking this, therefore, a convenient landing-place," he sailed about eight miles farther, "stopping over against a plain and open shore. But the barbarians, perceiving our design, sent their cavalry and chariots before, which they frequently make use of in battle, and following with the rest of their forces, endeavoured to oppose our landing; and indeed we found the difficulty very great on many accounts, for our ships, being large, required a great depth of water; and the soldiers, who were wholly unacquainted with the places, and had their hands embarrassed, and laden with a weight of armour, were at the same time to leap from the ships, stand breast-high amidst the waves, and encounter the enemy; while they, fighting on dry ground, or advancing only a little way into the water, having the free use of all their limbs, and in places which they perfectly knew, could boldly cast their darts and spur on their horses, well inured to that kind of service. All these circumstances served to spread a terror among our men."

4. The soldiers seeming to hang back, and "demurring to leap into the sea, the standard-bearer of the tenth legion, having first invoked the gods for success, cried out aloud, 'Follow me, fellow-soldiers, unless you will betray the Roman eagle into the hands of the enemy; for my part, I am resolved to discharge my duty to Cæsar and the commonwealth.' On this he jumped into the sea, and advanced with the eagle against the enemy; whereat, our men exhorting one another to prevent so signal a disgrace, all that were in the ship followed him; which being perceived by those in the nearest vessels, they also did the like, and boldly approached the enemy."

5. Thus the Romans first set foot on British ground, from

which they did not finally go away for nearly 500 years, though they had many a hard fight before they could

Difficulties. establish themselves there. We must not linger over all Cæsar has to say about the war in Britain, but only notice two interesting things. One is, that he had the greatest trouble with his ships, for the storms of these northern seas broke so many of them to pieces; and the Roman sailors were greatly puzzled by the tides, being most accustomed to the Mediterranean Sea, where there are no very observable tides. Cæsar says, "That very night it happened to be full moon, when the tides on the sea-coast always rise highest—a thing at that time wholly unknown to the Romans." The other interesting matter is about the war-chariots, which were quite new to the Roman soldiers, and terrified them very much. "Their way of fighting with their chariots is this: first they drive their chariots on all sides, and throw their darts; insomuch that by the very terror of the horses and noise of the wheels they often break the ranks of the enemy. When they have forced their way into the midst of the cavalry they quit their chariots, and fight on foot; meantime the drivers retire a little from the combat, and place themselves in such a manner as to favour the retreat of their countrymen, should they be overpowered by the enemy. Thus in action they perform the part both of nimble horsemen and stable infantry; and by continual exercise and use have arrived at that expertness, that in the most steep and difficult places they can stop their horses on a full stretch, turn them which way they please, run along the pole, rest on the harness, and throw themselves back into their chariots with incredible dexterity." It is often said that these chariots had sharp cutting scythes fixed on to the wheels and other parts, but it does not seem quite certain that this is true, as Cæsar tells us nothing about them, which he would most likely have done when he was describing them so carefully.

6. With all his courage and skill, Julius Cæsar could not make much way; he got once as far as St. Alban's, but he never really conquered Britain. It was about 100 years after his first coming that the Romans sent another great army, which really did subdue a good part of the island. One of the most celebrated British chiefs was a man named Caradoc, which the Romans lengthened out into Carac-tacus. He led his men very gallantly against the Romans, but at last was taken prisoner, and sent with all his family to Rome. In this calamity he behaved with such calmness and dignity

**British
resistance.**

that the people of Rome were struck with admiration, and gave him his liberty.

7. Another famous British leader was a woman, Queen Buddug, improved by the Romans into Boadicea. She may fairly be called a great heroine ; but she too was vanquished, and they say poisoned herself for shame and sorrow. It shows how completely the Britons afterwards submitted to the Romans, both in body and mind, that one of them, Gildas, who wrote a history of these times, calls Boadicea, his own country-woman, fighting for her liberty, "a deceitful lioness," and her people "crafty foxes."

8. The best of all the Roman governors who were sent to Britain, and the one who finally established the Roman dominion, was Agricola. We have his life, written by his own son-in-law, the great historian Tacitus, who has been A.D. 78. already mentioned. He had the deepest respect and Agricola. affection for him. He tells us of his bravery, modesty, and wisdom, of his skill in war and in the arts of government, and a great deal of this praise seems really to have been deserved. He completed the conquest of Southern Britain, and pushed a long way into Scotland, as far as the Grampian hills. Here there was a terrible fight between the Romans and the natives, whose general was named Galgacus. Tacitus, who doubtless heard all about this from Agricola himself, gives a spirited account of the battle, and of the stirring speeches which the two leaders made to their armies. The fight was a very obstinate and fierce one, but when night came the Romans were victorious, and the Britons fled. In their despair they set fire to their houses ; some even "murdered their children and wives, as an act of compassion and tenderness. The next day produced a more ample display of the victory ; on all sides a profound silence, solitary hills, thick smoke rising from the houses on fire, and not a living soul to be found by the scouts."

9. Nevertheless these northerners were never really subdued, and at last Agricola resolved to leave them in possession of their wild mountainous country, building a wall to prevent them from coming farther south. This wall stretched The Roman walls. between the mouths of the rivers Forth and Clyde, and was rather a line of forts than what we now call a wall. But it was found impossible to keep all that region in subjection, even as far north as the wall ; and some years later the Emperor Hadrian gave up a good deal of it, and built another wall much farther south, between the Solway and the Tyne. The place

where our best coals formerly came from was just in that neighbourhood, and is still called "Wallsend."

10. Agricola appears to have been a really kind and wise ruler over those who were once conquered. As he knew that "little is gained by arms where grievances and oppressions follow, he determined to cut off all the causes of war. . . . Beginning, therefore, with himself, and those appertaining to him, he checked and regulated his own household—a task which to many proves not less difficult than that of governing a province. . . . All that passed he would know, though all that was amiss he would not punish. Upon small offences he bestowed pardon; for such as were great he exercised proportionable severity."

11. Though it had long been believed that Britain was an island, it was not till Agricola's time that it became finally known and established. Agricola sent ships from a place supposed to have been Sandwich Haven, and they sailed on and on all round the north of Scotland, discovering the Orkney Islands, till they returned to the same place from which they had started. When in those northern regions they noticed how long the days were, but do not seem to have been aware that this was only in the summer-time, and that they paid for it by very long nights in winter. "Their days in length surpass ours. Their nights are very clear, and at the extremity of the country very short, so that between the setting and return of day you perceive but small interval. They affirm, that were it not for the intervention of clouds the rays of the sun would be seen in the night, and that he doth not rise or fall, but only pass by; for that the extremities of the earth, which are level, yielding but a low shadow, prevent darkness from rising high and spreading." It is curious to observe how easy it seems to find a reason for things we do not understand; we know now that this learned-sounding reason had nothing whatever to do with it, inasmuch as the earth is not flat, like a plate with edges, as they thought it.

12. Having established peace, Agricola regulated the taxes more justly, and would not allow extortion. He also tried to tame and teach the wild Britons. The lower people were employed in draining bogs and making firm and excellent paved roads. Some of these roads are still existing in England, especially one which was called Watling Street, and which extended all across England, from Dover, through London, to Chester. There is a very rough old stone to be seen in Cannon Street (which is now built up into a church wall to preserve it) which is called London Stone, and

**Britain an
island.**

**The Britons
become
civilized.**

is believed to be the old Roman milestone from which all the others were measured.

13. He also encouraged and helped the Britons to build temples, halls, and comfortable houses, like those the Romans lived in. These were very large and handsome, built round a courtyard, like our colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, and with fine pavements inlaid. Part of these pavements, and other things which have been buried in the centuries which have passed since, are often dug up now in London and other places. They made also large and beautiful baths, which seem to have been something like the Turkish baths we now have in London. One of them is still to be seen at Chester, and one at Bath.

14. All this was a great contrast to those wattled huts of the Britons, and many of the people took to the Roman manners very kindly. Agricola took care to have the sons of the chiefs taught Latin, and the other things the Romans learnt; he says they were cleverer than the Gauls; and in time they grew proud of speaking like the Romans, and dressing like them, instead of in skins and woad. With all this they unfortunately learned also a great deal of vice and luxury, and as Agricola expected, became far less brave and warlike; we shall hear, in the end, how helpless they were when left to themselves. The sort of civilization which is forced on people from outside is never so lasting or so beneficial as what they grow up to themselves.

15. Far better than all the arts and luxuries the Britons learnt from the Romans was the religion. Many Romans, by this time, had given up their old religion and had become Christians, having been taught by St. Paul certainly, and perhaps by St. Peter also. It was never known exactly how Christianity was first taught to the Britons; but it was certainly not by Agricola, or any of the great men, for they had not yet learnt it themselves, nor taken any notice of it; but, no doubt, many of the Roman soldiers and colonists who had been converted brought it with them. It is generally thought that a British lady is mentioned in the Bible—Claudia, in 2 Tim. iv. 21. It is even supposed that she may have been one of the family of Caradoc, who had been taken prisoners to Rome. It is known that a Roman gentleman, Pudens, had married a British woman named Claudia, and both are mentioned by Martial, a Roman poet.

Introduction
of Christian-
ity.

16. The first Christian church in our country was built at Glastonbury (the tale was that Joseph of Arimathæa built it, directed by the angel Gabriel). Glastonbury was at that time

a desolate island full of fens and brambles ; and the church was built, like the British houses, of wicker-work, or rods wattled and interwoven. It was sixty feet long and twenty-five broad. In this the early Christians "watched, fasted, prayed, and preached ; having," says Fuller, "high meditations under a low roof, and large hearts within narrow walls."

17. Though the Roman government was generally so tolerant of other religions, they began after a time to persecute the Christians. The reason seems to have been, that though they were quite willing to admit other gods side by side with their own, it was only on the supposition that the old gods did not lose their worship. But Christianity could not be received on those terms. The early Christians and Fathers of the Church did not even look on the heathen deities as mere fables and shadows ; they believed that they really existed, but were devils, and they taught that the gods of Rome and of all other nations must be utterly renounced. Thus Christianity came to be looked on as dangerous to the established order of things and to the empire.

18. The heaviest and worst of the persecutions was under the Emperor Diocletian, and this was the first one that reached Britain. This lecture cannot end better than with

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St. Alban.

Fuller's account of the first Christian martyr in our country. "The first Briton which to heaven led the van of the noble army of martyrs was Alban, a wealthy inhabitant of Verulam-cestre. . . . His conversion happened on this manner : Amphibalus, a Christian preacher of Caer-leon, in Wales, was fain to fly from persecution into the eastern parts of this island, and was entertained by Alban in his house in Verulam. Soon did the sparks of this guest's zeal catch hold on his host, and inflamed him with love to the Christian religion. . . . Not long after, a search being made for Amphibalus, Alban secretly and safely conveyed him away, and, exchanging clothes with him, offered himself for his guest to the pagan officers, who at that instant were a-sacrificing to their devil-gods ; where not only Alban, being required, refused to sacrifice, but also he reproved others for so doing, and thereupon was condemned to most cruel torments. But he conquered their cruelty with his patience ; and though they tortured their brains to invent tortures for him, he endured all with cheerfulness, till rather their weariness than pity made them desist. And here we must bewail that we want the true story of this man's martyrdom, which impudent monks have mixed with so many improbable

tales that it is a torture to a discreet ear to hear them. However, we will set them down as we find them. . . . Alban being sentenced to be beheaded, much people flocked to the place of his execution, which was on a hill called Holm-hurst; to which they were to go over a river, where the narrow passage admitted of very few abreast. Alban being to follow after all the multitude, and perceiving it would be very late before he could act his part, and counting every delay half a denial (who will blame one for longing to have a crown?), by his prayer obtained that the river, parting asunder, afforded free passage for many together. . . The sight hereof so wrought with him who was appointed to be his executioner, that he utterly refused the employment, desiring rather to die with him, or for him, than to offer him any violence. Yet soon was another substituted in his place, for some cruel Doeg will quickly be found to do that office which more merciful men decline.

"Alban, at the last, being come to the top of the hill, was very dry, and desirous to drink. Wonder not that he, being presently to taste of joys for evermore, should wish for fading water. Sure he thirsted most for God's glory, and did it only to catch hold of the handle of an occasion to work a miracle for the good of the beholders. For presently, by his prayer, he summoned up a spring to come forth on the top of the hill, to the amazement of all that saw it. Yet it moistened not his executioner's heart with any pity, who, notwithstanding, struck off the head of that worthy saint, and instantly his own eyes fell out of his head, so that he could not see the villany which he had done. Presently after the former convert executioner, who refused to put Alban to death, was put to death himself—baptized, no doubt, though not with water, in his own blood."

The stately abbey of St. Alban's marks the spot where his martyrdom took place.

LECTURE V.—THE TEUTONS.

The decay of the Roman empire. Origin of the English people. The Germans, or Teutons—their laws, manners, language, and religion.

1. As the Roman empire seemed now to have become too large to be conveniently governed by one man living at Rome, it was divided by Diocletian into four parts, which we may call provinces, each of which had its own sub-emperor, though all were still considered as one empire, and there was one chief or supreme emperor. One of the provinces consisted of Britain, Gaul, and Spain; and the governor or sub-emperor (Cæsar, as he was called) lived very often at York.

2. The great Constantine, who was the first Christian emperor, was for a long time sub-emperor of this western province, and lived at York. Afterwards the whole empire was
323. joined into one again under his rule, and it was he who founded as its capital the beautiful city of Constantinople, or city of Constantine.

3. But we are now coming to the time when great disasters befell this mighty empire; when it met with its strongest enemies, who finally broke it to pieces and planted themselves on its ruins. And these enemies, whom Rome could never conquer, but who conquered Rome, were our forefathers—the true forefathers of the English people. Though there is reason to believe that we are in some small part descended from the pre-historic men, and from the Celts or Britons, yet the main stock from which we spring, and from whom we have our language, our manners, and our government, are these people, with whom this lecture will be concerned. So if we were interested in the other nations of which we have heard, we ought to be still more so in this one.

4. This which is called the Teutonic race was a branch, and one of the greatest branches, of the Aryan family. At the time we first hear of them they were, like most other nations in the beginning of their history, wild and barbarous people. They were living north of the

The
Teutons.

Danube, east of the Rhine, in Denmark, and in other northern parts. We know that they were all one race, though separated into many tribes, by their language. Just as we judge the Indians, Greeks, Romans, and others to be of one original race by their having certain words and grammatical forms in common, so we can judge the different families into which these larger ones broke up to belong to each other, by their languages being still more like each other, by their having more of the same words, and their grammar being still more similar.

5. The principal Teutonic nations are now called the German, Dutch, English, American, Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian. In old times the principal tribes were called, Goths, Vandals, Burgundians, Lombards, Saxons, and Angles. Tacitus says that "Germany" was a name newly invented in his time.

6. The word "Teuton" is believed by some authorities to mean "speaking plain." These rough, wild people thought just as most other uncultivated people do, that their language was the only plain one, and they seem to have looked upon all others as mere gibberish. Even now we may sometimes find English people tempted to talk of other people's language as "gabble" or "chatter."

The syllable "Teut" or "Deut" meant clear; as we may see in the German word "deutlich," plain or evident. "Ish" is a mere termination, which we still use in fool-ish, Eng-lish, Dan-ish. So they would say Deut-ish = Deutsch or Dutch.

7. These people then who talked plain, the Teutons or Dutch, began about the time of the birth of Christ to be very troublesome to the Romans; and so they continued, very often being beaten, but never being conquered, until the time at which we have now arrived; and it was owing to them that the Romans went away from our island at last, leaving room for them to come afterwards and turn Britain into England.

8. The man who tells us most about them at first was the one already mentioned, who wrote the life of Agricola — Tacitus. He, who evidently took a great interest in the different nations the Romans had to do with (for we saw that he wrote about the Jews and the Britons), wrote also a long and very interesting description of the Germans, little thinking that these wild people, whom he as a philosopher looked upon with curiosity and interest, would after a time be the conquerors and successors of his own great nation.

9. Tacitus had complained a good deal about our climate, as being so dull, damp, and hazy. Now see what he says about

Germany. "Besides the dangers from a sea tempestuous, horrid, and unknown, who would relinquish Asia, Africa, or Italy to repair to Germany—a region hideous and rude, under a rigorous climate, dismal to behold or to cultivate, unless the same were his native country? Their land, taken altogether, consists of horrid forests and nasty marshes."

10. The Germans, or Teutons, were in appearance much like the Celts, being descendants from the same Aryan stock; he says they all "had eyes stern and blue, yellow hair, and huge bodies." Both the Gauls and the Germans were superior to the Romans in one point, namely, the use of soap, though it does not seem quite clear whether they employed it for cleanliness, or for the purpose of reddening their hair. A strong soap, with plenty of lime or soda in it, reddens the hair, and they appear to have thought it made them look more fierce and terrible. However, they certainly cared something about cleanliness also; for Tacitus tells us, in another place, that "the moment they rise from sleep they bathe; most frequently in warm water, as in a country where the winter is very long and severe."

11. One very great and good point of the German character was the honour they paid to women. They were almost the only barbarians who were content with one wife; though even with them the kings or chiefs had more, as a dignity. They respected their women extremely, and were very careful of the honour and virtue of their wives and daughters; so much so, that it was found by the Romans to be the greatest safeguard to take hostages from among their daughters.

When they went to battle their wives and children were lodged near to the field, and to each man "these are the witnesses whom he most reverences and dreads; these yield him the praises which affect him most. Their wounds or maims they carry to their mothers or to their wives; and these administer to their husbands and sons, whilst engaged in battle, meat and encouragement. Some armies, yielding and ready to fly, have been by the women restored through their inflexible importunities and entreaties. Captivity is far more dreaded by the Germans when it befalls their women."

12. If the women had to be so courageous, we may suppose what sort of fighters the men would be. "Many who have escaped in the day of battle have hanged themselves to put an end to their infamy. . . . In the day of battle

it is scandalous to the prince to be surpassed in feats of bravery, scandalous to his followers to fail in matching the bravery of their prince. But it is infamy during life, and indelible reproach, to return alive from a battle where their prince was slain." Though they were so energetic in war, a most extraordinary contrast appeared in times of peace. Then it seems that "much more of their time they pass in indolence, resigned to sleep and repasts. All the most brave, all the most warlike, apply to nothing at all; but to their wives, to the ancient men, and to any, the most impotent domestic, trust all the care of their house, their lands and possessions. They themselves loiter."

13. Their food was very simple; it consisted mostly of wild fruit, cheese, venison, and grain. Some of those who dwelt on the banks of the Rhine had vines and made wine; but the most common drink appeared rather curious to Tacitus. "For their drink they draw a liquor from barley, and ferment the same, so as to make it resemble wine." We are rather fond of the same drink still!

**Food and
drink.**

14. They were a very social and hospitable race. "To refuse admitting under your roof any man whatsoever is held wicked and inhuman. Every man receives every comer, and treats him with repasts as large as his ability can possibly furnish. When the whole stock is consumed, he who had treated so hospitably accompanies his guest to a new scene of hospitality, and both proceed to the next house, though neither of them were invited; nor avails it that they were not; they are received with the same frankness and humanity. . . . Their manner of entertaining their guests is familiar and kind." They were also fond both of giving and receiving presents.

Besides what Tacitus tells us, we know something about their ways of life from a long poem of their own, which our forefathers brought with them when they came to England, and which contains the wonderful adventures of a great hero, Beowulf. In it there is an account of one of their festivals. All the company received gifts; and besides eating and drinking, they were entertained with music and singing. The queen gave a mantle and a collar to Beowulf, who was the principal guest, and with it a pretty little speech, containing some good advice. After bidding him be gentle and kind to her little sons, she adds—

Feasts.

"Here is every man To other true;
Mild of mood; To his liege lord faithful;

The thegns * are united, The people are prepared,
The drunken vassals Do as I bid them."

Thus we see how high a tone the German lady takes. But the last line shows us also the darker side of these feasts. Tacitus tells us the same. "To continue drinking night and day, without intermission, is a reproach to no man." And, as we should expect, this intemperate drinking led to high words, fighting, and slaughter.

15. Their dress consisted of a mantle, which is "what they all wear, fastened with a clasp, or, for want of that, with a thorn." They also used for ornament furs and skins. The women dressed like the men, except that they wore linen, embroidered with purple, which sounds rather pretty.

16. They hated cities, and loved to live apart. The older civilized people, the Greeks and the Romans, loved city life; that was their idea of civilization. People who lived in the country were *rustics*, and quite on a lower level. Another word they had for those who did not live in cities, but in villages or hamlets, was "pagan" (from the Latin *pagus*, a village). That word afterwards came to bear quite another sense, and meant an idolater. This shows us that when the Romans were beginning to learn Christianity, it was at first the more intelligent and the more civilized who were ready to believe it, while the ignorant people, who dwelt in the country and worked in the fields, still believed in and were content with the old religion. But the Teutons, who themselves liked living in villages and cultivating the ground, when they became Christians, had another name for those who still clung to the old gods. They called them "heathen," or dwellers in wild heaths and wildernesses, and these were just as much behind the more civilized among the Teutons as the pagans were behind the Roman citizens.

17. It was, perhaps, one reason why those great Greeks and Romans could not maintain their position in the world, that they were never able to get to the idea of a nation, never beyond that of a city; while the Teutons, who did not love cities, grew by degrees from families to tribes, from tribes to small kingdoms, from small kingdoms to great nations, as we shall see by and by in our English history.

18. At the time of which Tacitus writes "they inhabited

* Or chiefs.

apart and distinct." Instead of cities, they planted villages, just as a fountain, a field, or a wood invited them. They seem to have felt, as an Englishman does, that every man's house is his castle; for the houses did not touch each other; each one had a vacant place all round it. Then, again, the villages were very independent of one another, and each had its own free space bordering it on every side, a ring of common ground where they thought the fairies and spirits dwelt. This ring or border-land was called the mark or march; if a stranger entered the march he had to blow a horn, for if he came in secretly every one had a right to kill him; which shows that they still felt, as in old times, that unless they were of one family, or had made special agreements, every man was the enemy of every other man.

19. The Teutons, who honoured their wives so highly, thought also very much of other family ties. To kill infants was esteemed an abominable sin, whereas among the Romans, and many other nations, it was quite a common practice, and hardly at all blamable, to kill them, especially girls. The mothers all nourished their own children, and they were brought up in very hardy and healthy habits; the young lord and the young slave just in the same way till the proper time came to separate them. The family all hung together; and each village or settlement was inhabited by relations, or supposed to be so. "All the enmities of your house, whether of your father or your kindred, you must adopt, as well as their friendships." If any one in the family did a wrong action, if he murdered or robbed a man of another family, it was not looked on so much as his own deed as that of his whole family, his father, uncles, brothers, and cousins; and the whole family had to make it good. All the members of a family were bound to protect each other from wrong, and, if possible, to hinder each other from evil-doing.

Family
feeling.

20. They were above everything noted for their love of liberty, though; like the Romans, they possessed slaves, who were, probably, conquered captives at first. But they themselves were free. Each freeman had some land of his own, and had a share in the government.

21. Even in those old days we can see something like our own constitution. Now we have a king (or queen), the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. Then, in nearly all the tribes, there was a king, a small assembly of chiefs, elders, or wise men, and a great assembly of the whole people, of all the freemen. Our House of Commons does not consist indeed of all the people, because, of course, in a great

Government.

country it is impossible for all to assemble; members of Parliament are, therefore, chosen or elected by the people to represent and speak for them.

The king was elected, but always out of one family—a special family which was supposed to be descended from their principal god, Woden.

The chiefs were chosen for their courage and talents, and were always followed by a band of brave young freemen. They were called by a name which we do not now think very grand or dignified—aldermen, or, in the old spelling, ealdormen: eldersmen. In those days, at any rate, age was supposed to confer wisdom, and elder or alderman was a title of honour.

Among the freemen themselves there was a certain difference of rank. Some were earls and some were churls. The earls were the most nobly born. The word churl has a bad meaning now, but it had not that formerly; it only meant that he was of lower rank. No doubt the higher-bred man was more polite; and so to be less polite or less generous came to be called "churlish."

22. This old Parliament, when there was any important matter to be decided, assembled in the open air. All the freemen, both earls and churls, came in a very independent style; all armed, and sitting down wherever they pleased. But it was only the king and the chiefs who spoke. They had probably already discussed the affair in private, and then stood forth, not to command, but to persuade the people. They made the very best and finest speeches they could (just as our Prime Minister would do now), while everybody listened; when they had explained what they wished to do, "if the proposition displease they reject it by an inarticulate murmur; if it be pleasing they brandish their javelins. The most honourable manner of signifying their assent is to express their applause by the sound of their arms."

23. As to their language, their "plain speech" as they call it, the very first written specimen we have of it is a translation of

the Bible, which was made for a tribe of the Goths by their Bishop Ulfilas, in the fourth century. The good bishop, however, missed out some of the accounts of the Jewish wars in his translation, because his flock were already so quarrelsome! We certainly should not be able to read it now, but we should find in it a great many words just like our own. The earliest written English also seems very different from our English. So does a child of a year old look very different from the man or woman of fifty; nevertheless, it is only the same person at another age. And so, or almost so, is our English language

as compared with the old English. Of the other Teutonic languages now existing, the German, Dutch, or Danish, we may say they are brothers or sisters, very much like each other, but each with their own specialties.

24. We could write a long list of words which are almost exactly the same in English and German. Here are a few of the commonest: Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Neighbour, Friend, Man, House, Boat, Ship, Ox, Cow, Lamb, Mouse, Bread, Butter, Fish, Flesh, Arm, Hand, Shoulder, Finger, Good, Young, Fine.

The Low Dutch, or language spoken in Holland, is still more like English than even the German, or High Dutch as they call it themselves.

25. With respect to their religion, Tacitus says that, "from the grandeur and majesty of beings celestial, they judge it altogether unsuitable to hold the gods inclosed within walls, or to represent them under any human likeness." Still they seem to have had images, which they kept in groves and forests, but which they carried about with them when they travelled. Religion.

Their principal god was Odin, or Woden, from whom all their kings were supposed to be descended. He was the god of war, but they also believed that he had invented the letters of the alphabet.

26. The most interesting thing of all is what we find about their god Tiu. The principal god of the Romans, as will be remembered, was Jupiter, the sky-father. The real word was Ju, to which piter, for pater or father, was added. The same word came from the old Aryan stock to our forefathers also. In Sanskrit it was Dyū; in Greek Zeus; in Latin Ju; in Teutonic Tiu. The French word for God, Dieu, again, is the same. All these have the same meaning of heaven, and God in heaven. Just as the Romans added the word "father" to the name of their god, so the Teutons also looked on Tiu as their father. His son was Mannus, or Man (the thinker). Is it not very grand to find in these old religions how man loved to feel himself the son of God?

27. Our names for the days of the week, as is well known, were originally given in honour of the gods and goddesses of our forefathers. First the sun and the moon; then Tiu; then Woden or Odin; then Thor or Thunder, the god of storms; next Frea or Friga, the goddess of peace and plenty; and lastly Soetere, of whom little if anything remains but his name. Their beautiful goddess of spring and dawn was Eostre, who still gives her name to the most hopeful and joyful of the Christian festivals.

LECTURE VI.—THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.

Departure of the Romans. The Picts and Scots. The settlements of the English—their treatment of the Britons. Cerdic. Arthur.

1. From the time of Tacitus onwards the Teutonic tribes continued harassing the Roman empire, and by the beginning of the fifth century they were giving so much trouble, even in Italy itself, that the Romans wanted all their legions nearer home. They began to withdraw from their more distant provinces, as from Roumania, which was then called Dacia, and from Britain.

Before they went away they repaired the wall of Hadrian from the Tyne to the Solway, as the northern barbarians were also growing more and more troublesome. The Romans fully meant to come back again; but they never did so—they never could find the opportunity. The Teutons spread everywhere. There were Goths in Italy, Goths in Spain, Vandals in Africa, Franks in Gaul, and very soon Angles in Britain.

2. Now came the proof of what was said above. The Roman civilization forced on the Britons had done but little good and much harm. They had been so used to be governed by others that they did not know how to govern themselves; they had been so used to be fought for that they had nearly forgotten how to fight for themselves. As soon as the strong hand, which had kept them under while protecting them, was lifted off everything seemed to fall to pieces.

3. The Britons began to quarrel among themselves. Some, perhaps the least civilized of them, made friends with the

Picts and Scots. barbarians to the north, who were, of course, their kinsfolk. These barbarians, seeing the comforts and wealth of the civilized regions where the Romanized

Britons lived, soon managed to get over the Roman wall, and to make plundering expeditions into the very heart of the country.

4. The Romanized Britons hardly knew how to defend themselves; they had lost their savage courage, and had not learnt

the Roman discipline. One of them, named Gildas, who is supposed to have lived in the sixth century, and who wrote a very curious history of the times after the departure of the Romans, gives an account of the northern enemies.

5. We have now done with our Roman authorities, with Julius Cæsar and Tacitus; this is the first British book we have had. Gildas, however, wrote in Latin, though not in the masterly style of either Cæsar or Tacitus. Gildas.

He evidently tried very hard to write in a fine manner; sometimes he appears to have attempted to imitate the old Hebrew prophets, and it is astonishing what a number of wicked kings and other people he found to denounce.

6. This is a translation of his description of the Picts and Scots, as those northern invaders were called. "The Picts and Scots, like worms which in the heat of mid-day come forth from their holes, hastily land again from their canoes; . . . differing from one another in manners, but inspired with the same avidity for blood, and all more eager to shroud their villanous faces in bushy hair than to cover with decent clothing those parts of their body which required it. Moreover, having heard of the departure of our friends" (that is, of the Romans), "and their resolution never to return, they seized with greater boldness than before on all the country as far as the wall. To oppose them there was placed on the heights a garrison equally slow to fight and ill-adapted to run away—a useless and panic-struck company, who slumbered away days and nights on their unprofitable watch. Meanwhile the hooked weapons of their enemies were not idle, and our wretched countrymen were dragged from the wall and dashed against the ground. . . But why should I say more? They left their cities, abandoned the protection of the wall, and dispersed themselves in flight more desperately than before. The enemy, on the other hand, pursued them with more unrelenting cruelty than before, and butchered our countrymen like sheep."

7. During all these troublous times we can see with reverence the influence of Christianity in the wonderful men who stood, as it were, in the breach, to help the conquered, to tame and soften the conquerors. I fear we in England do great injustice to the memory of these saints. Because a great many fables and strange tales have grown up about their histories, and too much has been made of the honour and reverence due to them, and because some of the saints in the Roman calendar were noted for what we cannot call virtues at all, we are apt to confuse them altogether,

and think the very word "saint" means some useless unpractical bigot; that is, if we ever think about them at all. For the most part, however, we have quite forgotten them, or only know their names as belonging to old churches and towns.

8. But when we read different histories of these times, we find there have always been wonderful Christian heroes (sometimes on the Danube, sometimes in Italy, and other places), leading glorious lives, dying glorious deaths; teaching, baptizing, mediating, feeding the starving, clothing the naked. One such man

St.
German.

was in Britain while the wars with the Picts and Scots were at their height—Saint Germain or Germanus, a bishop from Gaul. He had come over to Britain to argue against some heretics. For, unhappily, Christians had already begun quarrelling about words and doctrines which are hard to understand. However, while in the country he was implored to aid the poor Britons against their enemies, and he is said to have presided over the most singular battle that, perhaps, ever took place on English ground. Fuller tells us the story

"The pious bishop" (after baptizing multitudes of pagan converts), "turning politic engineer, chose a place of advantage, being a hollow dale surrounded with hills. . . . Here Germanus placed his men in ambush, with instructions that, at a signal given, they should all shout 'Hallelujah' three times with all their might, which was done accordingly. The pagans were surprised with the suddenness and loudness of such a sound, much multiplied by the advantage of the echo, whereby their fear brought in a false list of their enemies' number; and, rather trusting their ears than their eyes, they reckoned their foes by the increase of the noise rebounded unto them; and then, allowing two hands for every mouth, how vast was their army! But besides the *concavity* of the valley improving the sound, God sent a *hollowness* into the hearts of the pagans, so that . . . without striking a stroke, they confusedly ran away. . . . Thus a bloodless victory was gotten without sword drawn, consisting of no fight, but a fright and a flight."

9. If this victory, however, "not by shooting, but by shouting," was ever really achieved, the Britons were very unsuccessful on the whole. They turned and prayed the Romans to come back and help them. This is part of the letter they wrote to Ætius, who was a Roman general and consul. "The groans of the Britons. The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea throws us back on the barbarians; thus two modes of death await us :

we are either slain or drowned." We see how much the Britons were changed from the old days of Caradoc and Boadicea. It was really about time cowards like this got a new master.

10. For as the Romans had now too much on their hands to come back, the distressed Britons had to look out for some one else to help them. This time it was rather like the sheep praying the wolves to take care of them. The people they turned to had indeed been called "sea-wolves." They were the English.

11. At this time they were living as three tribes in Sleswig, and near the mouth of the Elbe. They were called the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes, and the The English. Angles were the most important and powerful of them. Though they were near neighbours, they were quite distinct from one another, and continued so long after they came into Britain. They hardly deserved a better name at present than sea-wolves or pirates. They were good sailors, as we are now, and good fighters. They had long been accustomed to come ravaging and pillaging on the coasts of Britain.

12. In an evil hour for the Britons, but in a good hour for us, Vortigern, a British king of Kent, bethought him of hiring one set of barbarians against another, and of persuading these Teutonic pirates to fight for him against the Picts and Scots, promising them in return not only money, but lands. "The barbarians," says the Briton Gildas, "being thus introduced as soldiers into the island, to encounter, as they falsely said, any dangers in defence of their hospitable entertainers, obtain an allowance of provisions, which, for some time, being plentifully bestowed, stopped their doggish mouths. Yet they complain that their monthly supplies are not furnished in sufficient abundance, and they industriously aggravate each occasion of quarrel, saying that unless more liberality is shown them they will break the treaty and plunder the whole island. In a short time they follow up their threats with deeds." Their arrival.

13. Their first landing-place was at Ebbsfleet, in the Isle of Thanet, which was then much more of an island than it is now, and separated from the mainland by a difficult and dangerous ford. Vortigern, perhaps, thought that he could pen them up there, and they would come no farther. But he little knew what he had done. After the quarrels Gildas mentions, and more and more of the strangers coming pouring in, they soon burst out of the island, under their two chiefs Hengist and Horsa. The names of both these chiefs meant horse (*hengst* is a German word for horse now), and the standard of Kent is a

horse to this day. I believe we may still see a horse marked on the sacks of hops which come from Kent. Our forefathers liked naming themselves after animals, but especially after wolves.

14. They crossed the ford which bounded the Isle of Thanet on the west, and marched towards London, which was a rich town even in the old Roman days, noted, as it is now, for its commerce. The first great battle with the Britons was fought on

449.
The first
battle.

the way, at Aylesford in Kent, and the English conquered, though one of their chiefs, Horsa, was slain. After this victory there was a frightful massacre. These "wolves," our ancestors, were still heathens, and very cruel and merciless. The other Teutons who invaded the Roman empire had partly learned Christianity, and with it had become more pitiful, so that they did not utterly exterminate the conquered. But it was a long time before those in Britain learnt Christianity. Many of the Britons fled from their homes, and took refuge in caves; the same caves where the old palæolithic men had fought with hyænas and bears long ago. In those caves, where, deep down, we find rough flint implements and bones, there are found nearer to the top the golden ornaments of the British ladies, their pins and combs, and beautiful enamelled brooches; and their money, with Roman inscriptions.

15. The first of the kingdoms which the Teuton invaders founded was that of the Jutes in Kent. Afterwards the Saxons also began to settle themselves in the southern counties, in Hampshire, Dorsetshire, &c., under their king, Cerdic.

Cerdic was the forefather, either directly or indirectly, of all our kings and queens, even down to Queen Victoria, so we ought to remember his name; and he was called the King of Wessex, or the West Saxons.

16. Although Gildas speaks so slightly of the courage of the Britons, still they held out in different parts for a long time, and sometimes beat their enemies back. It was most likely during the founding of the kingdom of Wessex that King Arthur lived and fought (if he ever lived at all), though it is thought by some that his kingdom was on the border-land between England and Scotland. He was a British king, and we all know from Tennyson's Idylls that he was continually fighting against heathenism and lawlessness. Those heathen were the Angles and Saxons.

17. A very amusing old knight, Sir Richard Baker, who in the seventeenth century wrote a most quaint history of England, gives us this account of King Arthur.

"He in twelve set battles discomfited the Saxons; but in one most memorable, in which, girding himself with his sword 'Callibourn,' he flew upon his enemies, and with his own hand slew 800 of them; which is but one of his wonderful deeds, whereof there are so many reported that he might well be reckoned among the fabulous, if there were not enough true to give them credit!" Perhaps we may not be quite so ready as Sir Richard to believe these exploits, though even he is more moderate than one of the old British writers, who says Arthur slew in that battle "940 by his hand alone, no one but the Lord affording him assistance."

18. But all would not avail. The sturdy English pushed on, massacring many of the Britons, enslaving some, and driving others farther and farther west. The Teutons called all people whose language they did not understand Welsh. Those who live near Italy still call the Italians Welsh, and their country Welshland. Those who came to Britain called the Celts or Britons Welsh, and so we call some of them to this very day. But it must be remembered, that not only those we now call Welsh, but the Irish, the Highland Scotch, and the dwellers in the Isle of Man are descended from the old Celts, and speak dialects of their old language. So do many of the people who live in Brittany in France. So did, till about 100 years ago, the people in Cornwall, which was called West Wales. A very short time since a monument was erected in memory of the old lady who last spoke the Cornish tongue.

19. It is a curious thing that the British cattle seem to have undergone the same fate as their masters. The Britons had a breed of small and short-horned cattle, which still survive in Wales and Scotland, and until lately were also to be met with in Cornwall and Cumberland. Most of us know the look of the little wild Welsh and Highland cattle, which are sometimes driven to London. All our English breeds are derived from those the English brought with them, some of which still live wild in Chillingham Park. This breed was formerly called the Urus.

20. Whilst the rest of the country seemed to be given up to savagery and heathenism; in Wales, in Ireland, and in Cornwall the Christian religion continued to flourish, and learning was kept up. It is said that there were 200 philosophers in Caer-leon, which is now a village, but Celtic
Christianity. was a thriving city then; and there were some notable saints among them. Many of the villages and towns in Cornwall are

named after ancient saints, whose history is, perhaps, very interesting, but of whom we know scarcely anything. Fuller studied the life of St. David, the patron saint of Wales, and seems to have found it very attractive reading ; but he says, " I am sensible that I have spent, to my shame, so much precious time in reading the legend of his life, that I will not wilfully double my guiltiness in writing the same, and tempt the reader to offend in like nature."

So we must take the hint, and pause.

LECTURE VII.—THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH.

The introduction of Christianity. Gregory the Great. State of Christianity in the sixth century. Civilizing influence of the Christian teachers. Monasteries. Bede.

1. We have now heard of the founding of two kingdoms, Kent and Wessex, by the Jutes and the Saxons. Afterwards there came in more Saxons, who founded other kingdoms: the East Saxons, Middle Saxons, and South Saxons, who gave the names with which we are so familiar to Essex, Middlesex, and Sussex. (Kent is the old British name.) And then came also the Angles, who founded the kingdoms of Northumberland (which was the name given to all the land north of the river Humber), East Anglia, which was divided between the North-folk and the South-folk, and Mercia, which is in the middle of England.

2. By looking on the map we see that the Angles, who had been the most important of the three tribes before they came to Britain at all, now got possession of the largest share of the new country, and, by degrees, the whole of the land inhabited by the Teuton invaders came to be called Angle-land or England. The Welsh, however, generally called the Teutons, Saxons, because it was the Saxons in Wessex who made the greatest impression on them; and the Welsh and the Highlanders call us Saxons to this hour. In many histories of England we find all our forefathers called Saxons; but it seems better, when we are speaking of them all under one name, to call them by the same which they bear still, the English. As there were but very few of the Jutes in comparison with the other two tribes, and their name soon died out, we may also very properly call them Anglo-Saxons; only, if we do that, we must not forget that they are our own ancestors.

3. The seven principal kingdoms which the invaders founded were Kent, Wessex, Northumberland, Mercia, Sussex, Essex, and East Anglia. These are generally called the "Heptarchy," which is a Greek word, meaning "the rule of seven." But there never could be said to be a real

The Hept-
archy.

Heptarchy, consisting of seven settled kingdoms. They were always, when not fighting the Welsh, fighting each other, and sometimes there would be more, sometimes fewer, kings. Northumberland was often divided into two parts, Bernicia and Deira, each of which had its own king. Still, on the whole, there may be said to have been those seven kingdoms; and the rest of the country, Wales, Cornwall, and Strathclyde, which was the name given to Cumberland, Westmoreland, and part of Scotland, still belonged to the Britons. Northumberland reached as far north as the river Forth, and the Lowland Scotch are, in reality, Angles or English, like ourselves.

4. During all this time the country must have been in a fearful state, with these heathen warriors marauding and fighting, and taking possession of the land; though when they settled down they seem to have lived quietly in their village communities, as at home. The Britons would not or could not teach them Christianity; most likely they were too proud to learn of their conquered slaves. Fuller says, "This set the conversion of Germany so backward, because, out of defiance to the Romans, they hugged their own barbarism, made lovely with liberty; blotting out all civility from themselves, as jealous that it would usher in subjection."

5. So, though the Welsh and Irish continued to improve in learning and religion, this had no effect on the English. At last, however, they too learnt Christianity, and they learnt it from the Romans. The history of the conversion of the English is told us most beautifully by an Englishman who lived not very long after it took place, Bede, or the Venerable Bede, as he is called. It is from him that we learn the well-known story, how Pope Gregory the Great went into the market-place at Rome, where among other merchandise he saw "some boys set to sale, their bodies white, their countenances beautiful, their hair very fine;" how when he heard of what nation they were, he said, With those fair faces, they should be not Angles, but Angels; and how he never rested till missionaries were sent to England to withdraw those people from the wrath of God, and teach them to sing His praise. This Gregory was a very great and good man; such faults as he had belong perhaps more to the age he lived in than to himself, and both he and others doubtless looked on them as his greatest virtues.

6. It was in the year 597 that the Roman missionaries, with Augustine their chief, came to England; landing, as the first

English settlers had done, in the Isle of Thanet. Ethelbert, the King of Kent, "ordered them to stay in that island, where they had landed, and that they should be furnished with all necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them." He was not ill-disposed to Christianity, for he himself had married a Christian princess from France, and, considering the high respect all his race bore to their wives, Queen Bertha's opinions would doubtless have great weight with him.

597.
The Christian Missionaries.

7. Still he was afraid to let the missionaries come into his house, "lest, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and get the better of him." So, like the true Teuton he was, he chose to receive them sitting in the open air. Augustine and his companions came before him, "furnished with Divine, not with magic, virtue, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and, singing the Litany, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom they were come."

8. After the conference the king permitted them to live in Canterbury, and to preach to any who chose to listen to them. Here they lived and laboured to such good purpose that "several believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their innocent life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine." Before long the king himself was converted, and after that many more of the people followed his example. "Their conversion the king so far encouraged, as that he compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. For he had learned from his instructors and leaders to salvation that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion."

Conversion of Kent.

9. Let us now pause to consider the state of Christianity at the time when these Roman missionaries brought it to England.

Any one who reads the Gospels must surely be struck with the simplicity of Christ's teaching; how little dogmatism there is in it, how little formality, how little mystery; how much practice, how much kindness and gentleness, how much faith and trust in God as a Father. In the five or six hundred years which had passed since the death of Christ, what had happened?

10. The Christian religion had, in some respects, changed very much from what Christ had taught, and was on its way to change more.

State of Christianity.

1st. God seemed removed immeasurably farther off. Even Christ seemed more awful and less sympathizing. Men sought out some intermediate beings, nearer to themselves, and less terrible. They thought a great deal of angels; still more of saints; above all, of the Virgin Mary. She became the ideal of tenderness and purity. It can hardly be said that she took the place of the old heathen goddesses, for she was far higher, purer, and more gentle than they; but as some of them had appeared to be wise, smiling, and beneficent, and had been dearly loved and honoured, all that love, and much more, was now lavished on the Mother of Christ.

2nd. Besides good supernatural beings, they believed very vividly also in evil ones, and in the power and number of the devils. They thought they were ever on the watch to tempt and to beguile. Everything they did not understand, any mysterious sight or sound, they thought was the work of some evil spirit; and they believed in possession by devils. Gregory himself, who was very clever and learned, as well as good, tells of a woman who ~~eat~~ a lettuce without making the sign of the cross, and who, with it, swallowed a devil and became possessed.

3rd. They had a most wonderful awe and reverence for "relics;" that is, for things which were believed to have belonged to Christ or the saints. We can quite understand the beginning of this; we ourselves have a feeling of tenderness and affection for any, even valueless, object which reminds us of one who has been dear to us. We treasure locks of hair, and other such things, and would not like them rudely handled; but the feeling had already become superstitious. Gregory said that if profane persons attempted to move or touch the relics of saints, such as were kept in all the churches, they would fall down dead.

4th. The whole service had become more *ritualistic*. The priests and bishops were looked on as most sacred, and far removed from common mortals. The sacrament was far more of a mystery than it had been of old. Images and pictures were used as helps to devotion, though they were not worshipped. We saw that Augustine and his companions had a cross and a picture of Christ.

5th. The greatest change of all, perhaps, was the growth of what is called asceticism; that is, a hatred of the body, of all common, human life, of natural affection, of marriage. The height of virtue, in the opinion of many, was to withdraw from the world,

from all useful occupations, from all love and happiness, and to give themselves up to prayer, fasting, and watching. This is very different from what we think the Bible teaches. "If any man love God, let him love his brother also." But in all times there has been a craving in some minds for being, as they feel, "alone with God." Many Protestants have something of the same sentiment, and Cowper expressed it very beautifully when he wrote—

"Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His too successful war.
The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree,
And seem by Thy sweet bounty made
For those who follow Thee."

In none of these things should we wish to condemn unreservedly; for even when we differ we can sometimes sympathize. Indeed, if we wish to understand we must sympathize to some extent; we must try to see what other men have felt, and how they came to feel it, though we may have other feelings and thoughts of duty ourselves. This is more necessary in matters of religion than in any others, for the religion which people really believe is the most important fact about them.

11. Though we may think that Christianity had in some things changed for the worse, let us remember with thankfulness how pure, how merciful, how beautiful it was still; and never cease to love the name of Gregory and Augustine, who taught it to our fathers.

After about twenty years Christianity reached Northumberland. The principal missionary who went there was a certain Bishop Paulinus, who was described by one of those whom he baptized as "a man tall of stature, a little stooping, his hair black, his visage meagre, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and majestic."

12. The good Gregory was now dead, but his successor, Pope Boniface, took a great interest in the affairs of England, and sent long letters of good advice to the King of Northumberland and his wife. With his letters he sent presents: to the king a shirt, a robe, and a golden ornament; to the queen a silver looking-glass and a gilt ivory comb; and to both the blessing of St. Peter.

13. The King of Northumberland was at this time a very

powerful and influential man named Edwin.* He, too, had a Christian wife, for he had married the daughter of King Ethelbert of Kent. He did not embrace the new religion hastily, but, "being a man of extraordinary sagacity, he sate alone by himself a long time, silent as to his tongue, but deliberating in his heart how he should proceed, and which religion he should adhere to." He afterwards summoned a council of his "wise men" to consider the matter still farther.

627.
Conversion
of Northum-
berland.

14. Our forefathers were not indeed men to change their religion easily and lightly. Though they were still ignorant and rough, they were thoughtful men. They did not care only for food, and drink, and for such things as they could see and handle; they reflected also on invisible things: on life, on the soul of man, on his feelings, and his nature. Their language is noted among all its brothers of the Teutonic speech for possessing more words of that sort than any of them—words about mind and thought, emotions and affections.

The end of their deliberations was that Edwin and all his nobles embraced Christianity, and were baptized at York, a great number of the common people joining them; whilst the chief of the heathen priests himself profaned the altars and destroyed the idols.

15. Edwin was now the strongest of all the kings in England; his kingdom extended as far north as the Forth, and the capital of Scotland, Edinburgh, is named after him. It was, in his days, called Edwin's burgh. He also made himself, in a certain sense, master and head of the whole country. He governed as a Christian king ought. "It is reported," says Bede, "that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of King Edwin extended, that, as is now proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island, from sea to sea, without receiving any harm."

16. But after Edwin's death the Northumbrians fell back into heathenism, and had to be converted over again. This time the missionaries did not come from Rome, but from Ireland and Scotland. The Irish, who had been converted by St. Patrick, were very vigorous and fervent Christians. They sent zealous and holy men to preach the gospel in Scotland, Friesland, Burgundy, Switzerland, even in

The Irish
Church.

* The whole story of Edwin's conversion will be found in 'Freeman's Old English History,' pp. 51, &c.

Italy. One of them, Columba, settled on the island of Iona, west of Scotland, and founded a monastery there, from whence came the missionaries to Northumberland.

Though the Irish are now devoted to the Pope, they were not so then—they had some little differences of opinion; as, for instance, which was the right season for keeping Easter, and how the priests' hair should be cut; and it was disputed for some time whether the Church of Northumberland should own allegiance to Rome or Ireland. In the end it was decided that it should adhere to Rome as the other English Churches did.

17. In about 100 years all the land became Christian. The last kingdom to be converted (though lying so near to Kent, which was the first) was Sussex. The Christian missionaries, beside religion, taught the people many useful arts—they taught the Sussex men to fish!

Conversion
of Sussex.

"The bishop," writes Bede, "when he came into the province, and found so great misery from famine, taught them to get their food by fishing, for their sea and river abounded in fish, but the people had no skill to take them, except eels alone. The bishop's men, having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God took 300 fishes of several sorts, which, being divided into three parts, they gave 100 to the poor, 100 to those from whom they had the nets, and kept 100 for their own use. By this benefit the bishop gained the affection of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly goods, seeing by his help they had received those which were temporal."

18. We must hope the bishop and his companions did not feel, like the good and great Gregory, that by thus "entangling himself in worldly matters he wasted his soul and decayed in virtue." Their noble Christian and human hearts, like Gregory's own, were too strong for the feeble and selfish religion which only cares to save its own soul; they remembered the example of the Christian's Master, who never thought it beneath Him to feed the hungry and comfort the sorrowful.

This same bishop, Wilfrid, received from the king a grant of land with "all the goods that were therein." Among these goods were 250 slaves. All these he at once set at liberty and baptized.

19. Other arts too sprang up under the shadow of Christianity. People began to build stone churches with pillars and aisles, and even with glass windows. As the English did not yet know how to make glass, they fetched men from France to do this part of the work, and by degrees they learnt the art themselves, though

glass was a very rare luxury for a long time after this. With

Christianity too came learning. The Roman missionaries brought Latin with them. Some time afterwards the Pope also sent Greek missionaries, who brought their own language. These last, Theodore and Adrian, were both, Bede tells us, "well read both in sacred and secular literature; they gathered a crowd of disciples, and there daily flowed from them rivers of knowledge towards the hearts of their hearers." They not only taught them out of the Bible, but also gave them lessons in astronomy, arithmetic, Greek, and Latin. "Nor were there ever happier times since the English came into Britain. . . . The minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had just heard, and all who desired to be instructed in sacred reading had masters at hand to teach them."

20. We may imagine the delight it was to these wild people, who were clever by nature, to get instruction and learning; for we know what splendid pleasure it is to ourselves to be taught, to have our minds strengthened and enlarged. It seems to us when we get a wise teacher as if a new world was opened to us. So it must have done to them.

"In a single century," says Stubbs, "England became known to Christendom as a fountain of light, as a land of learned men, devout and unwearied missions, of strong, rich, and pious kings."

It was Archbishop Theodore who divided the country into bishoprics and archbishoprics, which have been very little changed since his day.

21. Now, too, monasteries began to rise all over the land. As they were of immense importance for many centuries, it is necessary we should know something about them; and we will observe at this time the good which they did, leaving the evil for a later period, when they had begun to degenerate. The life and death of the historian Bede, from whom so much has been quoted in this lecture, will show us the fairest side of monastic life. In the monasteries a great deal of useful work was done; it was not all fasting and meditation. When we consider the times, the fighting and tumults which still went on, the ignorance and barbarism, we shall see that in the monasteries there was a refuge not only for religion, but for gentleness, learning, and civilization.

22. Bede tells us that he was born in the territory of the monastery of Jarrow, which was on the coast of Durham, at the mouth of the river Wear. He was given, at the age

673. **Bede.**

of seven years, to be educated by the Abbot Benedict,

and, "spending all the remainder of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of the Scriptures; and amidst the observation of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing."

23. We read this about the occupations of the monastery: "The founder, like the rest of the brothers, delighted to exercise himself in winnowing the corn and thrashing it, in giving milk to the lambs and calves, in the bake-house, in the garden, in the kitchen." These were all healthy, peaceful, and useful employments. But besides helping to attend to all this, Bede studied religion and all the learning of the times. He knew Latin and Greek, and had read some at least of the old poets and philosophers whom scholars love to read now. He knew as much as could be known at that time of astronomy, physical science, arithmetic, grammar, and medicine. He was also very fond of music, singing, and poetry. He taught all the other monks, and many strangers, who came from all parts to learn of him, and he wrote forty-five books. Most of these were sermons or explanations of the Bible; but others were hymns and poems, or on scientific subjects. One was about spelling. But the one we prize most is that from which so much has been quoted here, his 'Church History.' He was the first English historian. This book was written in Latin (and we shall see who first translated it another time), but Bede loved his native tongue, and the last work he did was to translate the Gospel of St. John into English. Is not this a picture of a noble and a happy life? Now read the story of his beautiful death, written by one of his pupils who was with him to the end. He tells us that after the beginning of his last illness "he led his life cheerful and rejoicing, giving thanks to Almighty God every day and night, nay, every hour, till the day of our Lord's ascension." He was labouring hard to finish his translation of St. John, he dictating, while one of his pupils wrote. On "the Tuesday before the ascension of our Lord . . . he passed all that day pleasantly, and dictated now and then, saying, 'Go on quickly; I know not how long I shall hold out, and whether my Master will soon take me away.'" On the Wednesday "he ordered that we should speedily write what he had begun, and this done, we walked till the third hour with the relics of saints, according to the custom of that day. There was one of us with him, who said to him, 'Most dear master, there is still one chapter wanting; do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?' He answered, 'It is no

trouble. Take your pen, make ready, and write fast.' . . . Having said much more, he passed the day joyfully till the evening, and the above-mentioned boy said, 'Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written.' He answered, 'Write quickly.' Soon after the boy said, 'The sentence is now written.' He replied, 'Well, you have said the truth. It is ended.' Then he said, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.' When he had named the Holy Ghost he
735. breathed his last, and so departed to the heavenly kingdom."

24. Some of the monasteries of this time seem to have been presided over by ladies. There was one very famous one, of

Hilda. which the ruins are still to be seen at Whitby in Yorkshire, which was ruled by the Abbess Hilda. She belonged to the royal family, and must have understood the art of governing very well, for she trained up many clergymen, and no less than five bishops. In her abbey dwelt Cædmon, the first English poet, who made so many and such beautiful verses on the Bible histories, that he was believed to have "learnt the art of poetry, not from men, but from God."

Thus we see how the monasteries are like islands of harmony and culture in the midst of wild oceans of discord and strife.

LECTURE VIII.—THE UNITING OF THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS.

The kingdoms of the English. The "Bretwalda." Egbert. The Danes. St. Edmund.

1. ENGLAND was now beginning to have far more intercourse with the rest of Europe than she had had for a long time. In the fervour of their new conversion, the English began to send missionaries to convert their heathen kinsfolk on the Continent; and by means of them, their zeal and their learning, England became well known and famous; for at that time our country was more learned and more religious than many of its neighbours.

2. It is now time, then, that we should inquire a little more into the state of the Continent, and how the great empire of the Romans had fared during the centuries which had passed since they left Britain. It will be remembered how the Teutonic or German races were fall- The Romans
and the
Teutons. ing upon it on all sides, settling themselves in Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa, and Britain. By the beginning of the ninth century the Teutons had lost some of these conquests. They had entirely lost their African possessions, and had given way to the Arabs or Saracens. The Saracens had also established themselves in Spain and in a part of France.

3. But, on the other hand, the Teutons were growing stronger and stronger in other parts. There was a great tribe or people of Teutonic race called the Franks, who were now the chief people in Germany and Gaul. Their name means "free men." In English the word "frank" still means open, unreserved, free-handed, free-hearted. As the Angles had changed the name of Britain into England, so the Franks changed that of Gaul into France. They also gave their name to Franconia in Germany. The difference between the settlement of the Franks in France and that of the English in England, is that the English destroyed the old inhabitants, and brought in their own language and habits. The Franks did not destroy the people of Gaul, but settled in among them, and by degrees learnt their language,

which the Gauls before this had learnt from the Romans. The French is one of those languages which are called Romance, as having been learnt from Rome, and being very much like the Roman or Latin speech. But at the time of which we are now speaking the Franks still talked their own native German.

4. And now it was that, to show how completely the Germans had conquered the Romans, the King of the Franks was made

Emperor of Rome! This German emperor was called Charles the Great, which was afterwards translated into French as "Charlemagne." He

800.
The Emperor
Charles.

really deserved the name of "great," and we have something to do with him in English history; for he began to take an interest in English affairs, and it was under him that the first king of all the English was trained up. It seems that he began to notice the English through the missionaries whom they sent among the Franks. One of his dearest friends was an Englishman from York, named Alcuin, who had, perhaps, been one of Bede's own pupils. Alcuin had a great love for Charles, calling him "David" as a sign of affection, and went to live in France, that he might help him in many ways, especially in teaching the people. It shows how much the Franks were behind the English in learning, that he had to send to York to get books for his school.

5. Hitherto the Germans on the Continent, as well as the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons in England, had been very much broken up into small states or tribes, which was a great hindrance to their progress and strength. Charles conquered some of these scattered tribes, and made alliances with others, so as to join them all into one, under his own government. We know that afterwards the German empire broke up again, for we have seen in our own day how it has been reunited, and there is an Emperor of Germany again (though he has nothing to do with Rome, as Charles the Great had)

6. In England the various kings and kingdoms had been constantly fighting and struggling; now one being master, and now another. Though we will not call our ancestors "kites and crows," as Milton did, and though all this conflict was really the rough-hewing of the grand English nation, yet we need not linger over it, or burden our memories with the details. The time was coming when all the smaller kingdoms would be gathered under one head, and would thus become far more great and powerful, even then; still more, would have the possibility of growth and future greatness. It had often been the case that one of the kings

would gain a certain authority over some or all of the others, as Edwin of Northumberland had done. When that was the case he was called "Bretwalda." It is not quite certain what that word meant, though some people believe that it meant "Wielder of Britain."

7. At the time at which we have now arrived, Northumberland, which had been so strong, learned, and civilized, had sunk down again, and was weak and distracted. The most powerful kingdom was Mercia, and Offa, the Mercian king, began to lord it over the others. He set one of his sons-in-law to be King of Northumberland, and another to be King of Wessex. In each of those countries another man claimed the throne; both of these were obliged to fly the country, and both took refuge with Charles the Great.

8. One of these, the claimant of the throne of Wessex, was Egbert, who afterwards gained that and a great deal more. It has been mentioned that in the old heathen times the kings were all supposed to be descended from the god Woden. By this time, as they had been Christians so long, they had altered their opinion about Woden. They now thought of him as a man, but still he was believed to be the founder of the royal family, and one of his descendants says of him, "He was the king of many nations, whom some of the pagans still worship as a god." Though they no longer thought the royal family sprang from a god, yet they still had a great reverence for it. Now Egbert, besides being a very clever man, was the only living descendant of Woden; therefore Bertric, Offa's son-in-law, was very jealous of him.

9. "Sweet are the uses of adversity." Had Egbert not been banished from his country, had he been made king easily and at once, he would, perhaps, never have been the king he was. While living under the protection of Charles he learnt a great deal. He watched him uniting the scattered German tribes into one strong kingdom, and when he came home he followed the example.

10. Bertric, the supplanting King of Wessex, came to a melancholy end. His wife, the daughter of Offa, was a very wicked woman, jealous of every one whom her husband loved. If she could not get rid of them openly she would give them poison; and at last, when she was intending to poison a young friend and favourite of the king, by some mistake Bertric also partook of the cup, and so both perished together. After this the queen, detested by every one, was obliged to leave the country, and she

too went to the court of Charles. It seems that he could not have known much of her character or adventures, for he made her the abbess of a large convent of nuns, where, as might have been expected, she behaved very differently from the wise Abbess Hilda. At last her conduct became so disgraceful that she had to be expelled from her convent, and ended her wicked life very miserably, begging her bread in the streets of Pavia, a city in Italy.

11. Directly after Bertric's death Egbert returned to Wessex, and was at once received by the people as their king. He had learnt patience in his exile. He spent twenty-five years in strengthening his own kingdom of Wessex, and extending it towards the west by fighting and subduing the Britons in Devonshire, Cornwall, and Wales. Offa had also done a great deal towards conquering the Welsh, and in these wars we can see how much the Christian religion had softened and improved the character of our fathers. The English had now ceased to massacre and exterminate their enemies, as they did at first. When they fought and conquered the Britons now, instead of killing or driving them away, they allowed them to dwell undisturbed in their own lands, as long as they would obey the laws.

12. Offa had now been dead for some time, but his successor in the kingdom of Mercia, seeing Egbert's growing power, resolved to make another fight for the mastery, and invaded Wessex. Egbert thoroughly defeated him in one battle, and after his death Egbert was chosen King of Mercia also. Seeing how powerful he had now become, the smaller kingdoms submitted to him without much difficulty. There only remained Northumberland. Egbert marched against that with a great army, but it submitted without a fight.

13. Thus Egbert became king of all the English. But we are not to think he was king as Queen Victoria is queen. The other kingdoms continued more or less distinct, with their own kings or princes; but these kings owed a sort of obedience to Egbert; they paid him tribute, and if he summoned them to help him in battle they were bound to come. The Emperor of Germany now has minor kingdoms under him, as Bavaria and Saxony; and so we, too, in India have princes and nawabs under our government, who pay us tribute and render us obedience, but who still rule more or less distinctly in their own provinces. The rule of Egbert was rather like this. England never fell to pieces again,

800.
Egbert King
of Wessex.

827.
Egbert over-
lord of Eng-
land.

as the Germany of Charles the Great did ; it continued, henceforth, to be one ; but it was not till long afterwards that the separate kingdoms were thoroughly and entirely united.

It was a very fortunate thing for England that it was a king of Wessex who gained the supremacy rather than a king of Mercia or Northumberland, for had the capital city of the country been at York, or some quite inland place, instead of at London or Winchester, it would have cut us off far more from intercourse with the rest of Europe.

14. One thing, which no doubt made it easier for Egbert to unite all the country under himself, was trouble from without. Hitherto, since the English tribes had first come to Britain, they had been left pretty much to themselves, except by the missionaries. But now, as has been said, foreigners began again to take an interest in England and English affairs. Some did good, as Charles the Great, but others were terrible scourges.

15. These last were the Danes, as they are called. For the next two or three hundred years our history is full of them. It almost seems as if we were going back 400 years, and reading history over again. Then we had a Christian **The Danes.** population slaughtered or driven away by heathen and barbarous invaders from over the sea. Now we get just the same. These "Danes" did not all come from Denmark, though, as most of them did so, they were all called by that name. Many of them came also from Norway and Friesland. It was from South Denmark and Friesland, as we know, that the first Angles, Jutes, and Saxons had come ; so these were in fact, their near relations. The Norwegians were also a branch of the Teutons ; they all spoke nearly the same language as the English ; they had also the same habits and the same religion which the English had formerly had ; they still worshipped Woden and Thor. They were quite as worthy of the name of sea-wolves as our forefathers had been. Here is an account of the first visit the Danes paid to England, which gives a pleasant idea of them. "Whilst the pious King Bertric" (this was Offa's son-in-law) "was reigning over the western parts of the English, and the innocent people spread through their plains were enjoying themselves in tranquillity, and yoking their oxen to the plough, suddenly there arrived on the coast a fleet of Danes, not large, but of three ships only ; this was their first arrival. When this became known the king's officer, who was already stopping in the town of Dorchester, leaped on his horse and galloped forwards with a few men to the port, thinking that they were merchants rather than

enemies, and, commanding them in an authoritative tone, ordered them to go to the royal city ; but he was slain on the spot by them, and all who were with him."

16. After this first visit they came again and again, and we have once more to fancy massacres, ravages, burning villages, burning churches, just as there had been so long before. Only the English now made a better defence than the poor Britons had done, and did not get exterminated nor driven off into the wild western regions. On the other hand, they never could drive the Danes quite away. Numbers of them settled down in the land, and took root there ; but as they spoke nearly the same language, and came of the same stock, they soon mixed with the English and became one with them. But we have not got so far as this yet ; it was still hard fighting for many years to come.

17. After Egbert's death his son Ethelwulf became king. He was, as his father had been, the principal king or over-lord of England, with under-kings in different parts. He had not an easy time of it. He was beset on both sides. The Danes came up the Thames ; they spent a whole winter in the Isle of Sheppey ; they brought a great army and 350 ships to the mouth of the Thames, sacked the city of Canterbury and the city of London, and put to flight an army which came from Mercia to oppose them. On the western side it was almost worse. The Danes made friends with the Britons, who were living in Devonshire, and there was a great deal of fighting and misery there also. At last, however, the Danes got the worst of it, for the time, and went away for eight years, during

which time Ethelwulf died in peace, leaving four sons, who were all kings in turn. To show, however, what misgivings he had as to the future, we will read one little extract from the account of his will. "For the benefit of his soul, which he studied to promote in all things from the first flower of his youth, he directed through all his hereditary dominions that one poor man in ten, either native or foreigner, should be supplied with meat, drink, and clothing by his successors until the Day of Judgment ; *supposing, however, that the country should still be inhabited by men and cattle, and should not become deserted.*"

18. The three elder of his sons were Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred. Many of the names of our ancestors had interesting meanings. Egbert means "Bright-eye." Ethel means "Noble," and was a very favourite beginning for a name.

Ethelwulf was "The noble wolf."
 Ethelbald "Noble and bold."
 Ethelbert "Noble and bright."
 Ethelred "Noble in counsel."

The noblest of all, however, was not named Ethel, but Alfred or Ælfred, which means an elf or fairy in counsel. "Red" meant "counsel" or wisdom; and we shall hear of another Ethelred in due time, who did not at all deserve so grand a name.

19. The three Ethels had very short and troubled reigns. The Danes came back, and the fights began again. The Danes grew stronger and stronger. They seized on much of the eastern part of England, and settled down there. There was at this time an under-king in East Anglia named St.
Edmund. Edmund. One of the old writers of this period,

Asser, of whom we shall soon hear more, tells us of him: "In the year 856 Humbert, Bishop of the East Angles, anointed with oil and consecrated as king the glorious Edmund, with much rejoicing and great honour, in the royal town called Burva on a Christmas Day." How he came to be so glorious and so beloved he does not tell us (he was only fifteen then, but the glory and the love came afterwards); we will, however, read what Carlyle says about him. Asking in what way Edmund rose to such favour and won such affection, he answers himself, "Really, except it were by doing justly and loving mercy to an unprecedented extent, one does not know. The man, it would seem, had walked, as they say, humbly with God,—humbly and valiantly with God,—struggling to make the earth heavenly as he could; instead of walking sumptuously and pridefully with mammon, leaving the earth to grow hellish as it liked."

20. When the Danes invaded East Anglia, Edmund was taken prisoner (so the story goes) and led before the heathen chiefs. They offered him his life and liberty if he would give up Christianity and reign under them. He refused. "Cannot we kill you?" cried they. "Cannot I die?" answered he. So they bound him to a tree and shot him to death with arrows.

21. "Edmund was seen and felt by all men to have done verily a man's part in this life's pilgrimage of his, and benedictions and outflowing love and admiration from the universal heart were his meed. Well done! well done! cried the hearts of all men. They raised his slain and martyred body, washed its wounds with fast-flowing universal tears—tears of endless pity, and yet of a sacred joy and triumph. . . In this manner did the men of the eastern counties take up the slain body of

their Edmund, where it lay cast forth in the village of Hoxne, seek out the severed head, and reverently re-unite the same. They embalmed him with myrrh and sweet spices, with love, pity, and all high and awful thoughts."

22. Afterwards this Edmund, who seems to have been about thirty years old when he died, was "canonized" or proclaimed a saint, and a great abbey called St. Edmund's Bury, or Bury St. Edmund's, was built over his grave, where the ruins of it may be seen to this day in that town of Suffolk.

23. Thus the Danes got possession of East Anglia. They burned down the wealthy abbeys of Peterborough, Ely, and Crowland, and killed or drove away the monks. After a time, however, those abbeys rose again, and two of our finest cathedrals are at Peterborough and Ely.

LECTURE IX.—ALFRED.

King Alfred. His education. His wars with the Danes. The treaty of Wedmore. The time of peace. Alfred's work in law, justice, religion, and education. His books.

1. THE last lecture left England in a very pitiable condition, ravaged and plundered by the Danish heathen. We heard of Ethelwulf's four sons, who were all kings in turn. The youngest and the greatest of them was Alfred, **Alfred.** who has left such a beloved and glorious name behind him, and who was, perhaps, the best and wisest king England ever had. We must pass hastily over his three elder brothers, that we may have more time for Alfred, "England's darling," as the people loved to call him, even centuries after his death.

2. Our knowledge of Alfred's life is mainly derived from four sources. The first and principal authority is a Welsh clergyman, Asser, whose work has been already quoted; it was in it that Ethelwulf's will was described. It has been **Authorities.** stated already that the Welsh (or Britons) preserved a love of learning even after the English had persecuted and driven them away far west; so that some of our old histories, and many old poems, were written by them. This Asser, who seems to have been a good and clever man, was a great friend of Alfred, and wrote his life, which is very interesting, because he tells us many little things that he heard and saw himself, and makes us feel as if we knew and loved his king and friend as much as he did. The life he wrote has not been all preserved, and of what we have, part seems to have been added by some other writer at a later time, but a great deal of it is genuine, and very pithy and quaint, as well as hearty.

3. Besides Asser, we have a 'Chronicle' by a man who was descended from the royal family, and who wrote a short history of England for the instruction of a cousin Matilda of his in Germany. He says Ethelred, the third son of Ethelwulf, was his grandfather's grandfather, and that Alfred was grandfather to Matilda's grandfather. He seems to have had a misgiving that

she would find his book rather dry (which it must be confessed it really is), and makes an apology for it, saying, "Although I may seem to send you a load of reading, dearest sister of my desire, do not judge me harshly, but as my writings were in love to you, so may you read them." And so will we also read a little of them.

4. Again, and principally, as far as Alfred's wars are concerned, we have the first and oldest true history of England, written by Englishmen, which is commonly called, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,' and will be referred to again later on.

5. Lastly, we have his own words, which show forth his noble character better than any one's words about him can do, and of which a few shall be quoted.

6. Both Asser and the Anglo-Saxon chronicler give us his whole pedigree. Of course he was descended (as all the English kings were supposed to be) from Woden; and as they now look upon Woden as a man, they also tell us who his father and grandfather were, and so back and back to "Sceaf, who was born in Noah's ark," and thence to Noah and Adam as in Genesis, ending with "our Father, that is Christ." Thus we see that they did not give up the idea of the Divine descent of man.

7. It need hardly be said that this pedigree is not at all to be trusted. But Asser tells us what is more to the purpose, that Alfred had a very good mother, "a religious woman, noble both by birth and nature."

8. Almost every one has heard the pretty story of the beginning of Alfred's education. Unfortunately, some learned men

Education. now say the story is not and cannot be true, but as others give reasons for believing it which sound very fair, we will take it as Asser tells it. He first describes how Alfred was more comely, more graceful, and more beloved by his parents and by all the people than any of his brothers, and that "his noble nature implanted in him from his cradle a love of wisdom above all things," and by and bye tells how his mother trained him. "On a certain day his mother was showing him and his brothers a Saxon (or English) book of poetry, which she held in her hand, and said, 'Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume shall have it for his own.' Stimulated by these words, or rather by the Divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully-illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, he spoke before all his brothers, who, though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered, 'Will you really give that book to one of us, that is to say, to him who can first understand and repeat it to you?' At this his mother smiled with satisfac-

tion, and confirmed what she had before said. Upon which the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it."

9. This seems to have been when Alfred was about four years old. We are not to suppose the child learned to *read*, but to repeat the poems; for it appears that he did not learn to read till after he was twelve years old. But he had, from that time, all through his life a passionate love of learning, and persevered in it through troubles and difficulties such as we can hardly imagine.

10. Alfred, while he was still a child, was twice at Rome. The Pope made much of him, and anointed him future King of England. He travelled through France, over the Alps, and through Northern Italy, and so he saw a great deal of the beauty of the world. It is to be feared he would not admire the Alps much, for in those days, and long after, people thought of mountains as horrible and savage places, only fit for wild beasts or hermits. But no doubt he was struck by the splendour of Rome, and the other Italian cities, so different from the rude and unbeautiful cities of England, as they were then. Rome was still the capital of the world. Many of the fine buildings which are now in ruins, and which we so often see in photographs, were, no doubt, still in good preservation. There, too, he saw the most learned, polite, and religious men then living. All this would make a great impression on the young and clever child, and we may be sure he never forgot it.

Visits to
Rome.

When we have once seen what we feel to be really good, exalted, and beautiful, it gives us something to aim at and to strive after. We shall see that he was aiming and striving all his life long; that was what made him so noble.

11. On his second visit to Rome he stayed there with his father a whole year. It seems strange that he did not learn to read, as there was a school at Rome on purpose for the English or Anglo-Saxons, to which King Ethelwulf made many handsome presents.* But in those days it was not thought needful for kings, noblemen, or gentlemen to know how to read. That was left for the priests or clergymen. Kings used to make their mark, just as the most utterly ignorant people do now, and as, it is to be supposed, in another fifty years no one will do. The young princes and nobles were taught hunting, wrestling, and the like; and they were also accustomed to hear songs and poems in their own language. Songs about war and heroes, kings and queens, the sea and the sea-kings, dwarfs and giants and dragons, beautiful

ladies and their lovers. Alfred dearly loved these old poems and ballads.

12. Meanwhile the fighting went on. All through his childhood and youth he must have been constantly hearing about the "pagans." I cannot attempt to give a history of all

**Ravages of
the Danes.**

these wars, but this is a specimen, out of the chronicle of Ethelwerd.

"865. After four years from the death of King Ethelbald, the pagans strengthened their position in the Isle of Thanet, and promise to be at peace with the men of Kent, who on their part prepare money, ignorant of the future. But the Danes break their compact, and, sallying out privately by night, lay waste all the eastern coast of Kent. . . .

"868. After one year that army, leaving the eastern parts, crossed the river Humber into Northumberland, to the city of Eboric (York). . . . After some delay they (the inhabitants) turned their thoughts to raise an army and repulse those who were advancing. They collected together no small bodies of troops and reconnoitred the enemy; their rage was excited, they joined battle, a miserable slaughter took place on both sides, and the kings were slain. . . .

"871. After one year, therefore, the army of the barbarians set out for Reading, and the principal object of the impious crew was to attack the West-Saxons. . . . An indescribable battle is fought, now these, now those, urge on the fight with spears immovable . . . The barbarians at last triumph. . . . Four days after King Ethelred with his brother Alfred fought again with all the army of the Danes at Ecesdune, and there was great slaughter on both sides; but at last King Ethelred obtained the victory."

13. This battle of Ecesdune, or Aston, "the Hill or Down of the Ash," was remarkable, as it throws great light on Alfred's character, his courage, and his good sense. Asser gives us a long description of it. "The pagans had divided themselves into two bodies, and began to

**Battle of
Aston.**

prepare defences; for they had two kings, and many earls, so they gave the middle part of the army to the two kings, and the other part to all their earls. Which the Christians perceiving, divided their army also into two troops, and also began to construct defences. But Alfred (as we have been told by those who were present, and would not tell an untruth) marched up promptly with his men to give them battle; for King Ethelred remained a long time in his tent in prayer, hearing the mass, and

said that he would not leave it till the priest had done, or abandon the Divine protection for that of men. And he did so too, which afterwards availed him much with the Almighty, as we shall declare more fully in the sequel. . . . Now the Christians had determined that King Ethelred with his men should attack the two pagan kings; but that his brother Alfred, with his troops, should take the chance of war against the earls. Things being so arranged, the king remained a long time in prayer, and the pagans came up rapidly to fight. Then Alfred, though possessing subordinate authority, could no longer support the troops of the enemy, unless he retreated or charged upon them, without waiting for his brother. At length he bravely led his troops against the hostile army, as they had before arranged, but without awaiting his brother's arrival. . . . And when both armies had fought long and bravely, at last the pagans, by the Divine judgment, were no longer able to bear the attacks of the Christians, and, having lost the greater part of their army, took to a disgraceful flight. One of their two kings and five earls were there slain, together with many thousand pagans, who fell on all sides, covering with their bodies the whole plain of Ashdune."

14. Asser seems inclined to praise Ethelred for remaining so long at his prayers; but had Alfred done the same, the battle would have ended very differently. I do not believe there was ever a more truly religious man in the world than Alfred; but he knew when he could serve God better by working than by praying. And this he kept in view all through his life. He loved prayer and reading the Bible as well as any saint, but he loved work and toil for his people too. His life and his mind were what we call well-balanced. And still more, he had one of those large, wide, sympathetic minds which can be keen and interested in many different ways, and on many different subjects. When there was fighting to be done, he showed himself a brave soldier and a clever commander; but when there was no fighting, he was equally ready as a law-giver, as a governor, and as a judge. He was like Bede in loving learning and teaching. He loved music, poetry, and books, hunting, hawking, and building. He loved clever men and their company; he loved his wife and children. In fact, what good thing was there that he did not love? And all these things he carried out, in spite of constant ill-health and dreadful suffering.

**Alfred's
character.**

15. He married when he was quite young, only nineteen years old. We know little about his wife, except that the two were

Marriage. evidently very happy together, and had a large and well-brought up family. We may judge how loving and faithful she was by the way Alfred himself writes in one of his books about the value of an affectionate wife. This is supposed to be written for the consolation of a husband who is in trouble and separated from his wife, and was partly a translation from an older writer, to which Alfred added some thoughts of his own. "She is exceedingly prudent, and very modest; she has excelled all other women in purity. . . . She lives now for thee—*thee* alone. Hence she loves nought else but *thee*. She has enough of every good in this present life, but she has despised it all for *thee*. She has shunned it all, because she has not *thee* also. This one thing is now wanting to her; *thine* absence makes her think that all which she possesses is nothing."

He would not have been likely to write in that way had not his own wife been very true and affectionate.

16. In 871, soon after the battle of Aston, Ethelred died, leaving two young sons. But in such troublous times no one

thought of making an infant king. No one thought of any king but Alfred, who was already so well known, admired, and trusted. According to the old English fashion, the most worthy member of the royal house was elected king. We do not hear of any holidays, or merry-making, or coronation ceremonies on his accession. It was in indeed no time for rejoicing. Almost as soon as his brother was laid in the grave he had to march against the enemy, who were now at Reading.

17. Soon we hear of them in all parts of the country—in Derbyshire, in Lincolnshire, at York, on the Tyne, at Exeter, at Warham, and in London. They did not come and go now. They took up winter quarters in different places, and then in the spring they went on ravaging.

18. Though Egbert had made himself king and lord of all parts of England, Alfred, his grandson, had now hard work to continue king even of Wessex; but he maintained himself, and kept the Danes at bay for seven years, both by sea and land.

19. It is remarkable that after the Angles and Saxons, who were such brave sailors and "sea-wolves," had got possession of England they seem for a long time to have lost their love of the sea. They left off roving, and turned rather into farmers; and if they wanted more excitement they fought one another. Alfred was the first who thought of establishing a navy; he was the beginner of that glory of England, that she rules the waves.

The fact was, there was no coping with the Danes without a fleet. No matter how many were killed, there were always fresh crowds and hordes of them coming from over the sea. "If in one day thousands of them were slain, on the next a double number were ready to fight again." Alfred determined to cut off the supplies. He devised better and larger ships; he manned them with the boldest sailors he could find, and set them to watch the Channel, so that no fresh troops or provisions should be landed. Once they had a great victory. A storm and a fog beset the Danes; Alfred's fleet came boldly forward, "their bands were discomfited in a moment, and all were sunk and drowned in the sea, at a place called Swane-wic," or, as we now call it, Swanage, on the rocky coast of Dorsetshire.

20. Still the Danes pushed on. At the end of seven years things looked worse than ever, and the people began to lose courage. Many of the monasteries had been burned; the bishops and monks wandered about the country with their precious relics, the bones of the saints and the sacred vessels, which they had rescued, and were thankful when they could take refuge beyond the sea; whilst the heathen offered up sacrifices to Thor and Woden in the Christian churches.

21. The people were reduced to the condition of servants or beggars; disorder and misery were everywhere. Alfred, with no army left, and only a few friends and his faithful wife, had to hide away in a miserable marsh, waiting for better times.

22. Had he been a weak man now all would have been lost. Many another man would have given in—would perhaps have gone off to Rome as a pious pilgrim (as some of the feeble kings had done), and ended his days in quiet. But Alfred was not one of that sort. He still trusted in God, and bided his time.

23. It was while he was hiding here that the story of the cakes happened, if it ever happened at all, and the prettier story of St Cuthbert. The tale is, that the king was sitting in his hut while his followers went to fish in a neighbouring stream. He was reduced to great straits, for he had but one loaf of bread left and a small measure of wine. He was full of anxious thoughts, and was trying to comfort himself by reading the Psalms of David, when a poor man came begging to the door. Alfred received the poor beggar as if he had been the Saviour Himself, and shared his little store of bread and wine with him. "The guest suddenly vanished, the bread was unbroken, the pitcher full of wine to the brim. Soon after the fishermen returned from the river, laden with a rich booty. In

the following night St. Cuthbert appeared to him in a dream, and announced that his sufferings were about to end, and gave him all particulars of time and place. The king rose early in the morning, crossed over to the mainland in a boat, and blew his horn three times, the sound inspiring his friends **Fresh hopes.** with courage, and carrying terror to the hearts of his enemies. By noon 500 gallant warriors gathered round him, he acquainted them with the commands of God, and led them on to victory."*

24. In those days everybody was ready to expect and believe in miracles—Alfred himself as much as any one. But something of this kind may have really happened, and been a little embellished afterwards; it is, at any rate, quite true that after that dreary winter the turning-point came. In the spring the king and his followers left their huts and hiding-places; they built a strong fort in the midst of the marshes, on a place which was then an island, though that district has since been drained and turned into dry land. He unfurled his royal banner, the people gathered joyfully around him, and hope began to revive.

25. As soon as he had collected an army large and strong enough, he marched against the camp of the Danes in Wiltshire. They had a great fight at a place called Ethandune (Eddington), and the English gained a complete victory. Those

Victory. of the Danes who were not killed in the battle took refuge in a fortress or fortified camp at Chippenham, and fourteen days after, subdued by hunger, cold, and misery, they submitted.

Alfred was merciful; he showed himself a true Christian hero. The Danish leader, Guthrum, made known that he wished to be a Christian. Alfred rejoiced, and became his godfather; he gave him the new name of Ethelstane at his baptism, and then they made a peace, known as the treaty of Wedmon.

26. Alfred could not hope to do more than free his own kingdom of Wessex, with part of the old Mercia, from the Danes. They drew a boundary line from the mouth of the Thames to the source of the river Lea, and along the Ouse to Watling Street, the old road which the Romans had made. All beyond that line the Danes were allowed to keep; their chiefs were, however, vassals or under-kings to Alfred; so that he was, in some sense, King of England, though his real authority was very small beyond the boundary line.

* Pauli's 'Life of Alfred.'

27. The Danes now settled down beyond that line among the English, especially in East Anglia and Northumberland. It was agreed that those who would not become Christians should depart out of the country. As they already spoke pretty nearly the same language and were of the same stock as the English, when they became of the same religion also they seem to have agreed together very fairly, and by degrees they intermarried and became one people. These Danes then were never driven away; their descendants are living there still, and are as much Englishmen now as we are. We can often tell which were the settlements of the Danes by the names of places, especially names ending in "by," which was their word for "town." In the parts of England where the Danes lived we find numbers of places whose names end in "by," as Derby, Whitby, Enderby; but in the other parts, where the English lived, we find hardly any.

28. But now that peace was restored, and the Danes driven out of his domains, it remained to be seen whether Alfred was as good a ruler as he was a soldier. How did he govern his country? We may imagine when the last of the Danes was fairly gone, and he could lay his sword aside, that he looked around upon the land. What did he see? The towns, even London itself, pillaged, ruined, or burnt down; the monasteries destroyed; the people wild and lawless; ignorance, roughness, insecurity everywhere. It is almost incredible with what a brave heart he set himself to repair all this; how his great and noble aims were still before him; how hard he strove, and how much he achieved.

29. First of all he seems to have sought for helpers. Like most clever men, he was good at reading characters. He soon saw who would be true, brave, wise friends, and he collected these around him. Some of them he fetched from over the sea, from France and Germany; our friend Asser from Wales, or, as he calls his country, "Western Britain," while England he calls "Saxony." He says he first saw Alfred "in a royal vill, which is called Dene" in Sussex. "He received me with kindness, and asked me eagerly to devote myself to his service, and become his friend; to leave everything which I possessed on the left* or western bank of the Severn, and promised that he would give more than an equivalent for it in his own dominions. I replied that I could not rashly and incautiously promise such things; for it seemed to be unjust that I should leave those sacred

* *Sic.*

places in which I had been bred, educated, crowned,* and ordained for the sake of any earthly honour and power, unless upon compulsion. Upon this he said, 'If you cannot accede to this, at least let me have your service in part; spend six months of the year with me here, and the other six months in Britain.'" And to this after a time Asser consented.

30. What were the principal things he turned his mind to after providing for the defence of his kingdom, and collecting his friends and counsellors about him?

Law—justice—religion—education.

31. He collected and studied the old laws of his nation; what he thought good he kept, what he disapproved he left out.

Laws. He added others, especially the ten commandments and some other parts of the law of Moses. Then he laid them all before his Witan, or wise men, and with their approval published them.

32. It is all very well to have good laws, but if there is no one to see that they are obeyed they are of no great use. Some of the worst-governed nations in the world probably have good laws on paper, but if their judges, lawyers, and magistrates are bad and wicked, or ignorant and money-loving, the laws only stop on the paper, and never pass into the lives of men. The state of justice in England was dreadful at this time. The judges were either ignorant or unjust, and when a cause was brought before them they decided so unfairly that no one was satisfied. Sometimes they were afraid of a powerful man, and if he had done wrong, or oppressed his neighbours, they did not dare to pronounce against him. Sometimes they would allow a rich man to give them bribes to take his part. Sometimes they were too ignorant or stupid to know anything about the laws, or to understand the causes which were brought before them. Thus the poor got trampled on, and the rich and strong were encouraged in wrongdoing.

33. Alfred's way of curing this was by inquiring into all cases, as far as he possibly could, himself; and Asser says he did this "especially for the sake of the poor, to whose interest, day and night, he ever was wonderfully attentive; for in the whole kingdom the poor, besides him, had few or no protectors." And he was so acute, and clear-headed, and just, that all the people of the land longed to have their causes laid before him, except those

* This means shaven on the crown of the head, as all priests were in those days.

who knew they were in the wrong, and knew, too, that they could not bribe or frighten the king. When he found that the judges had made mistakes through ignorance, he rebuked them, and told them they must either grow wiser or give up their posts; and soon the old earls and other judges, who had been unlearned from their cradles, began to study diligently; and if, as was most often the case, they could not read themselves, they would get their sons, or even servants, to read to them, "while they lamented with deep sighs in their inmost hearts that in their youth they had never attended to such studies."

34. Alfred would be proud of his country now if he knew the perfect justice, honour, and impartiality of our judges, and that the poorest man in the land is as sure of safety, protection, and right as the richest and mightiest.

35. For reviving and spreading religion among his people he used the best means that he knew of; that is, he founded new monasteries and restored old ones, and did his utmost to get good bishops and clergymen. For his **Religion.** own part, he strove to practise in all ways what he taught to others. Asser says that from his infancy he was "a frequenter of holy places, for prayer and almsgiving, and that, whether in prosperity or adversity, he never neglected holy meditation." But his religion went farther than this; it was a spirit that pervaded all he did and all he had. He made a resolution to give to God the half of his services, bodily and mental, the half of his time, and the half of his money. But the remaining half he so wisely bestowed, in teaching, training, and benefitting his people, and in showing kindness, too, to strangers and foreigners who needed it,—in doing God's work, both of justice and mercy,—that we may rather say he gave all to God. He, who was so fond of reading the Psalms, might have written the 101st Psalm himself, as a picture of his own life.

"I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

I will not know a wicked person.

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off.

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me;

He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house:

He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

I will early destroy all the wicked of the land;

That I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord."

36. He did none of these things carelessly, but whatever he put his hand to, he did it "with all his might." Giving alms, for instance, as we know, if it is practised in an easy, thoughtless way, is likely to do more harm than good. Alfred took pains that his alms should be "bestowed discreetly." He had read this quaint old saying of Pope Gregory, "Give not much to whom you should give little, nor little to whom much, nor something to whom nothing, nor nothing to whom something," and he made that his rule.

37. Education was in a still worse condition than everything else. We heard before that it was only the clergy who were

Education. supposed to have any book-learning, but in all the troubles that had come it seems as if it was not expected even of them. All the schools had been broken up. Alfred says that when he began to reign there were very few clergymen south of the Humber who could even understand the Prayer-book. (That was still in Latin, as the Roman missionaries had brought it.) And south of the Thames he could not remember one. His first care was to get better-educated clergy and bishops.

38. And next to get the laymen taught also. This he did in two ways. In our days, if a wise man went to a very ignorant place, and wanted to improve the people, he would open a school and get the best teachers he could find. So did Alfred. He founded monasteries and schools, and restored the old ones which had been ruined. He had a school in his court for his own children and the children of his nobles.

39. But at the very outset a most serious difficulty confronted Alfred. Where was he to get books? At this time, as far as we

Books. can judge, there can only have been one, or at most two books in the English language—the long poem of Cædmon about the creation of the world, &c., and the poem of Beowulf about warriors and fiery dragons. There were many English ballads and songs, but whether these were written down I do not know.

40. There was no book of history, not even English history; no book of geography, no religious books, no philosophy. Bede, who had written so many books, had written them all in Latin. (We may hope his English translation of St. John was still in existence, though it is lost now.)

41. Alfred had by this time, with a great deal of trouble, learnt Latin, and he knew that there were plenty of good books in that language which might be translated into English. Here

is part of a letter which he wrote to a friend of his, a bishop, on this subject.

... "I wondered greatly that of those good, wise men who were formerly in our nation, and who had all learnt fully these books, none would translate any part into their own language.

... I then recollected how the law was first revealed in the Hebrew tongue, and that after the Greeks had learned it they turned it all into their own language, and also other books; and the Latin men likewise when they had learned it . . . turned it into their own tongue, and also every other Christian nation translated some parts. Therefore I think it better, if you think so, that we also translate some books, the most necessary for all men to know, into our own language; and we may do this, with God's help, very easily, if we have stillness."

42. So when they had a time of "stillness" the king and his learned friends set to work and translated books into English; and Alfred, who was as modest and candid as he was wise, put into the preface of one of his translations that he hoped, if any one knew Latin better than he did, that he would not blame him, for he could but do according to his ability.

43. Now what books did they translate?

For a religious book he chose one which had been written in Latin by Gregory the Great; the very Gregory who sent the missionaries to England, and who, it was believed, was inspired by the Holy Ghost. In old pictures and statues of Gregory we often see him with a dove on his shoulder whispering into his ear.

44. For the history of England he took that beautiful and naïve one by Bede, of which we have already read parts. He also encouraged, if he did not write, the 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,' which had been very dry and poor before, but becomes full and interesting in his reign. This is the first history of themselves written by any Teutonic people in their own language, and not only scholars in England, but in Germany also, take great interest in it. I shall often give extracts from it as we go on, for it was carried on for some hundreds of years after this time.

45. For geography and general history he took a Latin book by Orosius, who was a friend of St. Augustine, and wrote in the fifth century. This he altered and added to, for in the time which had passed since it was written, men had learnt more about some parts of the earth. Two travellers whom Alfred knew had explored different parts of the north,—Norway, the

White Sea, &c.,—and gave the king accounts of what they had seen: the reindeer and the whales, and the people with their strange habits and ways. Alfred was interested in all this; he wrote it down and put it into his geography-book, where we may read it to-day, if we like.

46. Then he translated a book called the 'Consolations of Philosophy,' and added to that a great many wise thoughts of his own. He tells us some of his ideas about the government of his kingdom. "Thou knowest that covetousness and the possession of this earthly power I did not well like, nor strongly desired at all this earthly kingdom. But oh! I desired materials for the work I was commanded to do. . . . These are the materials of a king's work and his tools to govern with—that he should have his land fully peopled; that he should have prayer-men, and army-men, and work-men. . . . This I can now most truly say, that so long as I have lived I have striven to live worthily, and after my life to leave to the men that should be after me a remembrance of me in good works." Surely that noble wish and that noble striving have been fulfilled.

47. Beside all this, he had a great many other occupations. Asser, who often lived with him for months at a time, gives us

**His other
work.**

an account of his busy life. Notwithstanding his infirmities and other hindrances, "he continued to carry on the government, and to exercise hunting in all its branches; to teach his workers in gold and artificers of all kinds, his falconers, hawkers, and dog-keepers; to build houses, majestic and good, beyond all the precedents of his ancestors, by his new mechanical inventions; to recite the Saxon books (Asser, being a Welshman, always calls the *English, Saxon*), and especially to learn by heart the Saxon poems, and to make others learn them; he never desisted from studying most diligently to the best of his ability; he attended the mass and other daily services of religion; he was frequent in psalm-singing and prayer; . . . he bestowed alms and largesses on both natives and foreigners of all countries; he was affable and pleasant to all, and curiously eager to investigate things unknown."

He not only sent presents to the different Christian Churches in Rome, Jerusalem, &c., but all the way to India, where there were some Christian settlements, and this was the very first intercourse between England and India. Could he but have foreseen the state of things now, how he would have been amazed!

48. In the midst of all this business he had a great want—he

could not tell how the time went. In those days there were no clocks ; they had not yet been invented, or at all events none had come to England. And though in fine weather people can tell the time by looking at the sky, and seeing where the sun and the stars are, that is a very uncertain resource in a cloudy and foggy country like ours. Alfred had a very ingenious invention for getting out of this difficulty ; he had wax candles made very carefully and measured into compartments, each of which would burn a certain time. Then, however, a fresh difficulty arose, which gives us a pleasing idea of the warmth and comfort even of kings' palaces in those days. The candles, however carefully weighed, often burnt out before their time on account of the violence of the wind, which blew day and night without intermission through the doors and windows, and the cracks and fissures in the walls, both of churches and palaces. But the king's ingenuity soon hit upon an expedient to remedy this—an expedient so wonderful and beautiful that Asser seems quite lost in astonishment and admiration as he describes it. This last invention was no other than a lantern of horn ! by means of which protection the candle-clocks burnt for exactly the appointed period. It quite does one good sometimes to see how surprisingly clever things appeared at first when they were new, which we have now come to look upon as very obvious and commonplace affairs.

49. Thus Alfred's years went by. He had some more trouble with the Danes before his reign was over, but they were fully conquered and driven off again. Then followed four more years of peace, and then he died, only fifty-three years old ; worn out before his time, no doubt, by ceaseless toil ; and leaving behind him, not "a name at which the world grows pale," but a name at which every English heart grows warm with pride, and gratitude, and love. 901.

Note to par. 11, p. 71 : There is now a picture of Ethelwulf, with other Christian kings, in one of the galleries of the Vatican.

LECTURE X.—ENGLAND IN PROSPERITY.

Alfred's descendants. Ethelstane. Condition of the people. Ranks of society. The poor. Slavery. Treatment of women. Food, amusements, dress, buildings. The names for the months.

1. **THOUGH** Alfred died before his time, happily for England he left worthy children behind him. His eldest son, Edward,

901.
Edward
the Elder.

was made king, and under him England became greater and more glorious than it had ever yet been. He seems to have been quite as skilful a warrior and ruler as his father, but though he had had a good education, he was not so fond of study and books. Alfred appears to have taken special pains in training him and his eldest sister to succeed him in governing the kingdom and protecting it from the Danes. The sister, Ethelfled, was married to an alderman, a title which has been explained before. At the time of which we are now speaking an alderman seems to have been almost the same as a viceroy or under-king. Though Alfred was king over all (in a sense), still it was hundreds of years before it was forgotten that Mercia, Northumberland, and the others had been once separate kingdoms, and every now and then a king crops up among them, especially in the north.

2. Ethelfled's husband was Alderman or Viceroy of Mercia, and he helped Alfred and Edward most gallantly in the struggle

The Lady
of the
Mercians.

with the Danes. After he died Ethelfled took his place, and was quite as brave and gallant as he. In King Alfred's will he made a distinction between what he called the "spear-half" and the "spindle-half" of his family. He provided very liberally for his wife and daughters; but had he lived to see how Ethelfled led armies, built fortresses, and conquered enemies, he would perhaps have said she belonged to the "spear-half."

3. She helped her brother Edward not only in defending the kingdom which Alfred left, but also in reconquering the other part of Mercia where the Danes had settled themselves very strongly, and had founded the five boroughs which were called

the "Danish boroughs," Derby, Lincoln, Leicester, Stamford, and Nottingham. The boroughs themselves, however, were not conquered till some time afterwards. They also reconquered Essex and East Anglia, and they built forts in all directions. This was something quite new in English or Anglo-Saxon warfare, for all the German race hated walls and cities. But in the time of danger they had most likely often profited by the strong walls which the old Romans had built in many places, which were still standing firm, and which would give them shelter from their enemies. And so, by degrees, they became partly reconciled to fortresses and walled towns, though they still loved the open forest and plain better.

4. When Ethelfled, "the Lady of the Mercians," died, her brother succeeded to her dominions, and thus became king over all England south of the Humber. Here he was sole king, with no under-kings; but he was now so powerful that the other princes and kings in the whole island submitted to him. The Welsh and the Scotch had suffered from the Danes as much as the English had done, and no doubt they felt the need of a powerful protector; so "the kings of North Wales, and all the North Welsh race, sought him for lord." 922.

Submission
of the
whole
island.

North Wales meant all that we call Wales now, and as these North Welsh were the descendants of the ancient Britons, we may say that their conquest was now complete for the time. Then a year or two afterwards "the King of the Scots, and all the nation of the Scots, and all those who dwelt in Northumbria, as well English as Danish, and Northmen, and others, and also the King of the Strathclyde Welsh, and all the Strathclyde Welsh, chose him for father and lord." 924.

5. Edward was the over-king of all these; they owed him service, and he owed them protection. These under-kings and under-lords are called "vassals;" and we shall find the same system become more and more general throughout Europe as we go on. Thus Edward may be considered as sole king of England south of the Humber, and over-lord, or emperor, as he is sometimes called, of all the rest of the island—of all the Welsh and all the Scotch.

6. After his death his son Ethelstane was made king. He was as grand a king as his father. He too had had the advantage of being partly trained up by his grandfather Alfred; for we read that he was brought up at Alfred's court, and that, being a beautiful and gentle boy, 925.
Ethelstane.

with golden hair, his grandfather was delighted with him; prophesied that he would have a fortunate reign when his turn came, and gave him a royal purple mantle, a belt set with precious stones, and a sword in a golden sheath.

7. Ethelstane added to his father's kingdom the whole of Northumberland, so he was really King of England; very much the same England that it is now, except Cumberland, or Strathclyde, which had its own under-king still. But he

937. had to fight for it. The Danes, Welsh, and Scotch joined together to rebel against him and at Brunanburh one of the greatest fights the English had ever fought was fought and won. It seems to have been such a glorious victory that the man who was writing the history of this time (in the 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle') could not be content with telling it in a plain way, but broke out into poetry.

8. As we have now come to the palmy days of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, we will pause and try to form some clearer idea of the habits and manner of life of our forefathers in those old times.

We know that from the earliest times they had had different ranks of society, as we have now, only that they were still more distinct than ours are. For they thought they were of different birth and origin altogether, although our dear and noble Alfred taught the proud earls that men were all of one blood, saying, "Every one knows that all men come from one father and one mother." The old Teutons had not thought that, and though, of course, now that they were Christians they were bound to believe it, they still made a great deal of noble birth. We heard of the king, the earls, and the churls. The earls were the nobles, and the churls were the freemen, who were not noble, but who nearly always owned some land and had a voice in the government. But there was by this time another class of nobles also, who were not necessarily born so. These were the king's special followers and servants, whom he used to reward with lands and titles, just as now a clever lawyer or a victorious soldier is often made a lord, and has money or land given him. These newer nobles were called "thanes" or "thegns." A churl might rise to be athane, but in the old times he could never rise to be an earl.

9. An English king was not *absolute*; that is, he could not govern according to his own will; he had to get the consent of

the "wise men" for all that he commanded. The earls and the thanes, the bishops and the abbots, ^{The Witenagemot, or Witan.} were all supposed to be wise; and these formed an assembly or council for the king to refer to. The assembly was called in the old English language "Witan," or "Witenagemot." *Witan* meant wise or "witty" men, and *gemot* meant assembly.*

10. We have a curious way of seeing the different value they put upon the different ranks by the punishments that were fixed for injuring or killing them. In our days, if a man murdered an archbishop, a duke, or a beggar he would get just the same punishment. The life of every man, woman, or child in the country is held of the same value; but in those days there was a great difference. The punishment was generally a fine in money, paid to the family of the slaughtered man to compensate them for their loss. In the scale of fines fixed in Alfred's time, we find that to kill a king cost 120 shillings. Money was worth a great deal more then than it is now, and this was considered a very large sum. Moreover, he had to pay that twice over—once to the king's own family, and then again the same sum to the nation, because both had suffered loss. For an archbishop the slayer had to pay ninety shillings; for a bishop, alderman, or earl sixty shillings; and so on, down to the simple churl, and for him only five shillings!

11. But below all these there were a race of people whose family got nothing at all. These were the slaves or "thralls." If any one killed a slave he only had to make ^{Slaves.} compensation to his master for the loss of his services, just as he would have done had he killed his horse or his ox. We are not to think our forefathers were worse than other people in having slaves, for in old times, as was mentioned before, this was the universal practice. The slaves belonging to the English were partly descended from the old conquered Britons, but were partly of the same race as themselves. Sometimes freemen were degraded into slaves in punishment for some crime; sometimes they sank into that class through poverty, or sold their children into it. It was permitted by law to a poor man to sell his child, provided the child consented.

12. We will now look a little more closely into the condition of the old English slaves, because, though we read very little about them in history, they were really the largest part of the

people. There were many more slaves than freemen, just as now there are many more poor and working people than there are rich people.

13. One great interest in studying history is to notice how things have changed for the better. We have already observed how differently wars were carried on after the introduction of Christianity from what they were before, and at the present time they are far less savage and cruel than they were even two or three hundred years ago. The state of the poor is another thing in which there is a great change for the better—so great and marked a change that it ought to give us much hope for the future. The improvement, the progress which has been going on so long will not stop now, we may be sure.

14. A thousand years ago, nearly all the working classes in England, nearly all the ploughmen, the shepherds, the carpenters, the cooks, and the dairymaids were slaves. Let us try to realize that. In our days, if a man has a bad master, if a girl has a bad mistress, if they have to work too hard, if they do not get enough wages, if they are unkindly treated, what do they do? In theory at least, they can go away and seek another service which will suit them better. A thousand years ago, they could not do that. The master or mistress they had would always be their master or mistress, good or bad, kind or cruel. If the servant was goaded into running away, his master might pursue him and kill him, if he chose, for he was his own property. He would not be punished for killing him any more than a farmer would be punished for killing a vicious bull or an unruly horse. Again, the master, if he chose, might sell his servants. A slave was worth about five or ten shillings in those days, and there was a regular slave-market kept up at Bristol, which went on for hundreds of years. The master might whip them, or chain them up, or brand them; in short, he might be very nearly as cruel as he liked. Though it does not appear that they were often very cruel, still, with these powers we may imagine what a passionate or tyrannical master might make his slaves suffer.

15. The slaves were sometimes sold into foreign parts, but in general they were kept to the land on which they were born. If a man sold his farm or his estate, he sold with it the men, and the cattle, and the crops. The sheep, the pigs, the men, and the oxen are all put down together. If a gentleman or lady made a will, they would put down in it the house, furniture, money, land, and slaves. All this sounds very curious to us, and perhaps even rather amusing. But let us try and

imagine how we should have liked it ourselves, to be sold, or given, or willed away to a new master, who might beat us or kill us, and we not to have a word to say on the matter.

16. Still, even at this time, things were improving. Christianity had done something, and would do more. We remember that good Bishop Wilfrid, who taught the Sussex men to catch fish, and how he set his 250 slaves free. Many other bishops and clergymen did the same, and they taught the laity to follow their example. Though the law did not punish a master for killing his slave, the Church made him do penance for it as a sin. In those days the Church and the clergy had so much more power than they have now that we can hardly understand it. It was thought a very dreadful thing to be under the displeasure of the Church, and no doubt the fear of that would hinder many a man from cruelty. By degrees it became a custom for many people to give liberty to their slaves. In some of their old wills you may read how the master or mistress says, "Let Wulfware be freed; let Elfsige and his wife and his eldest daughter be freed; let Pifus be freed." Sometimes, which was a great deal better than doing it only by will after he was dead, a master would free his slave while he was still living. The slave would be taken to the church porch, or the altar, and solemnly set at liberty, and the record of it would be written in one of the Church books; or sometimes his master would take him to a place where four roads met, and tell him to go whichever way he pleased.

Influence
of Christi-
anity.

17. Thus, by degrees, things improved. Every now and then we read of laws being made for the good of the slaves. Their master had to give them two loaves every day besides the morning meal and noontide meal. They had their Sundays and other holidays, and, in some way or other, they had some money. How they got it is not exactly known, but perhaps it might be by working extra hours. They certainly had some, for we read how they sometimes possessed enough to buy their own freedom and that of their wives and children. One man bought freedom for himself, his wife, their children, and grandchildren for £2.

18. But while the slaves were thus gradually rising, the other poor people, the freemen, were gradually sinking. The *churls* were becoming *villains*, or villeins. That sounds like using rather abusive language, but, as we know, the words have changed their meaning. *Churl* has been already explained (p. 42). *Villain* at first only meant a sort of villager

Villeins.

or farm-servant, a country-man, as a villa means a country house, and used to mean a farm. By degrees it came to have a bad meaning, as so many other words have done; for instance, pagan and heathen.

19. What is meant by saying that the churls were sinking into villains is not that they were becoming wicked and villanous,

**Rise of the
feudal
system.**

but that they were seeking masters. Just as on a large scale the weaker princes or kings sought out a stronger one to be their master and protector, as the petty princes of Wales and Cumberland chose Edward "as father and lord," so in a small way private men who were not rich or strong tried to get some powerful man as master and protector. Then they became his "men," and had to do him service, so at last there was hardly a poor and free man left who was not bound to a lord. Thus he lost all share in the government, and became in many cases very much like a slave, tied to the land, and with no free will of his own.

20. This was, perhaps, in some ways a good thing for the poor man at that time, when there were so many wars and troubles, for, though it took away his independence, the protection of a good lord must have been a great comfort to him. In those old days the very words lord and lady must have had a pleasant sound. They were spelt hlāford, hlāfdige. Hlāf is the old English word for loaf. Hlāford and hlāfdige, which look very uncouth and unpronounceable, and which time has shortened and smooched down into lord and lady, meant giver of bread or loaf.

21. This system of everybody, from under-kings and princes down to the poor man, having a lord over him, prevailed over many parts of Europe for some centuries, and was called the "feudal system." It was more definitely established in England two centuries after the time of Alfred, but the things now mentioned were the beginnings of it.

22. When we turn our attention to the other people in the country who were not slaves or villains—the nobles, gentry, and

**Respect
towards
women.**

farmers or yeomen—it is pleasant to find in the first place that they still treated the women with great respect, as they did in the days when Tacitus wrote of them. The English women, in the times at which we have now arrived, nearly 800 years after Tacitus, still received much honour and consideration. Some were even known to sit among the "wise men" in the witenagemot,* though no ladies now-a-days sit in the House of

Parliament. They used to be present at all the feasts. They had property of their own, and could sell it or make wills to dispose of it as they liked ; and many laws were made to protect them in all ways. Thus we see the "spindle-half" were well cared for.

23. We will next inquire a little about the way our fathers lived, about their food and drink, their dress, how they amused themselves, and what sort of houses they inhabited.

The rich people fared very well, and ate many of the same sort of things that we do. They had wheaten bread, but the poor only got barley bread, because it was cheaper.

They had plenty of meat and game ; beef, mutton, fowls, venison, and hares ; but they had also what we do not eat now, goats, and at one time horses. It was for a curious reason that the eating of horses was given up. It seems that the Church forbade it because in heathen times it used to be done in honour of Woden. The clergy were not above looking after the food and manners of the people. They made them do penance if they ate anything only half-cooked, or anything dirty. More pork or bacon, however, was eaten than anything else. The country was still in great part covered with woods and forests, and it was therefore very cheap and easy to fatten pigs as they like acorns and beech-nuts. The word "bacon" is perhaps derived from "beechen." They ate fish, especially eels ; also salmon, herrings, lobsters, oysters, &c., and porpoises, which we should not wish for now. They had plenty of vegetables and fruit ; but some things which we have in very common use they had either very little of or not at all. They had cabbages, but no potatoes, nor rice, and very little sugar. Instead of sugar they used a great deal of honey, for they kept many more bee-hives than we do. They thought a good deal of spices, but of course in those days things which had to be brought from abroad, as sugar and spice, were very rare. There were but few ships, and those very small compared with what we have now. It was considered quite a handsome present to send some pepper and cinnamon to a lady.

24. The English still liked that "kind of drink made from barley" which Tacitus mentions. They had their strong ale and their mild ale, and this seems to have been the principal drink of those who could afford it. If the poor people could not get ale they had to drink water, or perhaps buttermilk. Wine, like sugar and spice, was a sort of luxury. Though they did grow grapes and make wine in England at this time, we may take it

Food and
drink.

for granted that the grapes would not ripen very well, and they probably got very little and very sour wine from them, while the wine they imported from foreign parts would be expensive. Some of our favourite and most common drinks,—tea, coffee, and cocoa,—they had never even heard of. They drank, however, some things which we but seldom see now, mead and other beverages, made from honey.

25. Unhappily, they were still, like the old Germans of Tacitus, too fond of drinking; and though the clergy made a great many laws against drunkenness, they were not much attended to. If a king or a great man made a feast, they would dine very early, and continue drinking all day long until the evening.

Banquets. 26. But they had a liking for something better too, for it was a common thing at a festival to have music and singing. In those days, when so few people could read, and there were so few books to be read, it was a great delight to the people to hear stories and histories in verse; and a man who could play on the harp and sing ballads was very welcome, wherever he went. He was called a glee-man.

Amuse-ments. They had also some other amusements which we cannot call very intellectual. They had tumblers and dancing bears, and they had jugglers, of whom some amusing old pictures remain—there is one of a man throwing three knives and three balls alternately into the air and catching them. Then, as was mentioned before, they liked hunting, hawking, wrestling, and such like “athletic sports.”

27. They were fond of handsome clothes. Both gentlemen and ladies wore ornaments, such as necklaces, bracelets, and rings of gold. They liked dresses of different colours, and with ornamented borders and stripes. Most of this we learn from the pictures with which they ornamented their books, and which are still in existence. When they made a picture of anything, for example, out of the Bible, they never thought of painting it as it really happened, or tried to find out what dresses the Jews wore, as we should do; but they painted them just like the men and women about them. So they painted King David and the other psalmists as a frontispiece to the Book of Psalms; and they made David sitting on his throne and playing on a harp, and the other four around him: one playing a violin, one blowing a horn, another a trumpet, and the last tossing up the knives and balls. This one was Ethan, who is said to have written the grand eighty-ninth Psalm. And when they painted the four evangelists

they dressed them in what people were then accustomed to wear. St. Matthew was represented in a purple undergown with long sleeves and a yellow border, and a green upper robe, striped with red. He sits on a stool with a brown cushion, but no back.

28. To make all these things they must have had people who could weave, spin, dye, and embroider. The ladies, even the princesses, spent the greater part of their time in such employments. There are descriptions of very beautiful embroidered robes, with figures of peacocks and other ornaments. One lady, who must have been a very good wife, had a curtain woven or embroidered with pictures of all the actions of her husband. They had also goldsmiths and jewellers to make the rings, bracelets, and other ornaments of which they were so fond. **Trades.**

The clergy of those days used to complain of fine dressing and luxurious ornaments, just as they do now, and as Isaiah did before them.

29. With respect to their buildings, it seems their houses were rather plain and inconvenient, and mostly built of wood; but their churches and monasteries were expensive and handsome. Some few of them remain to the present time. They were strong and heavy, with very thick pillars and round arches, for pointed arches had not yet been invented. The churches built in Italy at the same period all had round arches. Many of them are still to be seen, for in that climate buildings stand much longer than they do in England; but though they are of the same style of architecture, we cannot but own that they are far more beautiful and interesting than any of those of the same age in England. **Buildings.**

30. Though the outside of the houses was not handsome, they took a good deal of pains with making them nice inside. Rich people had beautiful hangings on the walls, made of silk, and sometimes decorated with golden birds, or with pictures in needle-work. It seems, however, that these splendid hangings were only put up on grand occasions, and in a common way they had all those windy draughts through the crevices of the walls which obliged Alfred to invent his lanterns. **Furniture.**

31. Their furniture, where people were rich, seems to have been very handsome. They had fine stools and benches, but very seldom any chairs with backs to them. Perhaps their athletic sports made them stronger than we are. Their tables were ornamented with gold and silver, and they had dishes and cups of

gold, though the commonest sort of drinking-cups were horns, for glass was still very scarce. They had not yet learnt to use forks.

32. Though we still call our days of the week by the same names our forefathers did, we have left off their names for the months, and taken up with Latin ones instead. The following is a list of the old names said to have been given to the months by the Anglo-Saxons, and if it is a correct one it gives us many picturesque little hints of the state of the country and ways of the people at that time :—

JANUARY. Wolf-month; "because people are wont always in that month to be in more danger to be devoured of wolves than in any season else of the year; for that through the extremity of cold and snow these ravenous beasts could not find sufficient to feed on."

FEBRUARY. Sprout-kail (or cabbage).

MARCH. Lent-month. "Lent" or "lenz," an old German word for spring, and which we give to the forty days of fasting, because they fall in the spring.

APRIL. Easter or Oster-month.

MAY. Tri-milki; because in that month they began to milk their cows three times a day.

JUNE. Weid-month or Pasture-month.

JULY. Hay-month.

AUGUST. Barn-month; because they filled their barns with corn.

SEPTEMBER. Barley-month; either barley-harvest or brewing-month.

OCTOBER. Wine-month; when they still attempted to make wine.

NOVEMBER. Windy-month.

DECEMBER. Winter-month, or Holy-month, in honour of Christmas.

Note to *Witan*, p. 87: The number of signatures of the Witan was generally from 90 to 100.

Note to *Witenagemot*, p. 90: This is inferred from the signatures of Queens and Abbesses, appended to certain documents drawn up by the Gemot.

LECTURE XI.—DUNSTAN.

The kings after Ethelstane. Edgar the Peaceable. The wolf-tribute. The vassal-kings. St. Dunstan. The religion of the period. Superstitions—witches—the ordeal.

1. AFTER the death of Ethelstane, his two younger brothers, Edmund the Magnificent (or the doer of great deeds) and Edred the Excellent, were kings in turn. Judging by their surnames, there seems some reason for thinking that Alfred's grandsons were worthy of him; but they, and most of the other kings of their line, had very short lives, and all through their reigns we find the principal interest centres in one man, a priest named Dunstan. Unlike the kings, Dunstan had a long life, and we read of him in six reigns in succession.

940.
Edmund.

2. It is very difficult to form a just opinion about Dunstan, because different writers give such very different accounts of him. One writes of him thus: "See how he hath been honoured, whom God thought worthy of honour! See in what manner he hath entered into the joy of his Lord, who was found faithful over the talents committed to his charge." Another (our old friend Fuller), after mentioning that Dunstan caused some one to do penance for seven years, goes on: "All that I will add is this; if Dunstan did septenary penance for every mortal sin he committed, he must have been a Methuselah, extremely aged, before the day of his death." A modern writer calls him "the villain Dunstan," and says he was "an imperious, audacious, ill-conditioned priest."

3. Now what shall we judge about this man? We shall perhaps agree that it is rather like the story of the gold and silver shield: that he was neither all good nor all bad; it depends upon what point of view we look at him from. It is very unfair, though it seems a great temptation, and is very common, to judge of a man's character according as he agrees or does not agree with our opinions. If he believes exactly what we believe, we are inclined to think he is a good man; though his actions may not be good at all. But if he believes something different from

what we believe, we perhaps think him very bad, and do not like to give him credit for his good actions. Unfortunately, this is the commonest of all in matters of religion, and we can partly see why. We care most about our religion because that is the root of everything else; but we forget that religion does not lie so much in our opinions as in our love. The more love we have, the more we can understand and see the goodness of other people's characters, and the more glad we can be that they are not all alike, but different. The more humble we are, the more we shall feel that we do not know and cannot know all; that we see but a part, while others see other parts, and that only God sees all and understands all.

4. This tendency perhaps explains why people think so differently about Dunstan. He was very strong in his religious opinions, and some people agree with him; these are inclined to think him quite right, and a saint. Other people differ from him, and these are inclined to think him all wrong, and, instead of a saint, a villain. We are also almost sure that some of the stories told of Dunstan, both good and bad, on which people have partly founded their opinions, were not true. Now though in many ways we may disagree with his religious views, we will nevertheless try to be candid, and to see truly what he did, and what he wished and intended.

5. First, then, we certainly find that in the governing of the country Dunstan gave very good advice, and the kings who took him for their counsellor, ruled well and wisely.

959.
Edgar the
Peaceable. Edgar especially, who reigned longer than some of them, and who made Dunstan almost what we should now call his "prime minister," had a very glorious reign. We will leave the religious part aside for the present, and observe how Edgar governed.

6. His very surname is a fine one, for he was called Edgar the Peaceable. There were no foreign invasions, and scarcely any fighting at all throughout his reign. After all the ravages and wars we have heard of, we can imagine the blessing this time of peace must have been to the country. It was not gained without trouble. Edgar, following Alfred's example had a fine fleet of ships, which every year sailed round the whole island. Very often the king went with it, and the Danes were prevented from ever landing. When he was not with his ships, Edgar spent a great deal of time in travelling about the country, and seeing that the judges and magistrates did their duty, and that order and justice were preserved. Thus the country was peaceful and pros-

perous, and long afterwards the people looked back upon Edgar and Edgar's law, and longed to have them again.

7. Though no fresh invasion of the Danes took place, there were, it will be remembered, a great many of them settled down in the land. Edgar treated these very well; he allowed them to be governed by laws of their own choosing, and in every respect made them equal to the English.

The thing most needful of all for the strengthening and prosperity of the kingdom was that it should be *consolidated*; that is, that all the different provinces and sub-kingdoms, which owed a sort of obedience to the king, should *Consolidation of the kingdom.* really obey him, should be really attached to him and to his rule, and more and more come to feel themselves one nation.

This was the great aim of Edgar's reign; and in all he did Dunstan was his principal helper and adviser. All the different under-kings grew very submissive, and he had hardly ever any need to fight for his supremacy. We read that he was rowed on the river Dee at Chester by eight of these vassal kings, while he himself steered the boat. That must have been a proud day for the King of England. Of the eight, one was the King of Scotland, one of Strathclyde, one of the Isles (Fuller says this one was "a great sea-robber, who may pass for the prince of pirates"), and five were princes of different parts of Wales.

8. One of these Welshmen is said to have had to pay a tribute to the king, instead of in money, in wolves' heads. If this story is true, it certainly shows that Edgar cared for the good of the people more than for getting money *The wolf-tribute.* himself, as the wolves' heads would not be of much use to him. They say that 300 wolves' heads were paid every year for three years, and that after that time they could not find wolves enough to pay it again. But they did not really extirpate or put an end to the wolves for a long time after that. In the poem of the chronicler on Ethelstane's battle of Brunanburh we hear of the wolves. After the victory was won, it says—

"the brothers
Both together,
King and Etheling (or prince royal),
their country sought,
the West-Saxon's land,
in war exulting.
They left behind them
the carcases to share
the swarthy raven,
the white-tailed eagle

with goodly plumage,
the greedy war-hawk,
and that grey beast
the wolf of the weald."

Did any one of us ever see a wild raven, or a wild eagle, or a grey wild wolf? Nor, let us thankfully add, have we ever seen a field of battle in our own land, with the pale carcasses to be devoured by them.

9. A great many different tales are told about Edgar's private life and character; it is to be feared he may not have been so good a man as he was a great king. There is a curious and romantic old story about his second marriage to Elfhryth or Elfrida,* but it seems very uncertain whether it is true. It is, at any rate, true that he married Elfrida, and there seems little doubt that, though very beautiful, she was a wicked woman.

10. We must now give some attention to the state of religion at this time, and to Dunstan's plans with respect to it. We have already seen that in those days any one who wished to further religion thought that he could do it in no better way than by founding or enriching monasteries; and we read the description of the monastery in which Bede lived and died as a sort of ideal. There were piety and learning, praises of God, teaching of men, writing and translating good books; and, again, cultivating the ground, tending the garden, orchard, and dairy. But even in Bede's time things were not always like this; many monks were idle and wicked; many monasteries could not be said to be houses of God. This is an account which he gives of one. The speaker (whom Bede quotes) says, "I, having now visited all this monastery regularly, have looked into every one's chambers and beds, and found none of them all, besides yourself, busy about the care of his soul; but all of them, both men and women, either indulge themselves in slothful sleep, or are awake in order to commit sin; for even the little houses that were built for praying and reading are now converted into places of feasting, drinking, talking, and other delights; the very virgins, dedicated to God, laying aside the respect due to their profession, whensoever they are at leisure apply themselves to weaving fine garments, either to use them in adorning themselves like brides, to the danger of their condition, or to gain the friendship of strange men." These people being thus warned in a vision, "were for a few days in some little

* Told in Freeman's 'Old English History,' p. 178.

fear, and, leaving off their sins, began to punish themselves ; but afterwards they returned to their former wickedness ; nay, they became more wicked."

This is a specimen, no doubt, of many others ; and probably they had gone on getting worse and worse.

11. Then there were the other clergy who were not monks, but who lived as clergymen do now, in their own houses, with their wives and families, and performed the services in the parish churches and cathedrals. These were called the *secular* clergy, and the monks the *regular* clergy. The secular clergy, as we saw in the life of Alfred, had become very ignorant, and probably very irreligious also. Though Alfred had done all a man could do to improve them, there still remained much to be done, and Dunstan was very earnest in his wish to reform the evils he saw. So far, of course, he was right. But most people in our time would not approve of his methods of reform. One great thing at which he aimed, was to make the clergymen give up their wives. There is certainly nothing of that sort to be found in the Bible ; but, as was mentioned before, it had gradually come to be believed that it was more holy and more pleasing to God to deny the natural affections, and that it was far better to be unmarried than married. Many of the old saints had forsaken their wives or their husbands, and this was considered a great mark of sanctity. Again, the popes had begun to think that the clergy would do their duties better and be more interested in them if they had not got wives and children to think of and provide for. Perhaps there may have been some truth in this ; but in general it has been found to work better if the clergy have homes and families, like other men ; they live, on the whole, purer lives, and they have more sympathy with their people. But they are not so entirely devoted to the Church, for they are citizens as well as priests.

Dunstan's
plans of
reform.

12. Now one of Dunstan's great ideas being to make the clergymen separate from their wives, we may imagine what a struggle it would cause, and how the clergy would hate the man who forced them to do it. This change was not peculiar to England ; it was made in all other parts of the Western Church,—that is, the Church which was under the Pope,—and caused great tumults in many parts, at which we cannot wonder.

13. Dunstan also favoured the monks, or regular clergy, and tried to put them above the secular. Wherever he could he turned out the clergy from the cathedrals and large churches, and put

monks in their place. Fuller owns the clergy were not so good as they ought to have been, but he thinks, and probably he is quite right, that the monks were much worse. "The hive of the Church was in no whit bettered by putting out *drones* and placing *wasps* in their room."

14. In these two points then Dunstan's reforms might almost be looked on as destructions; but, on the other hand, he strove in many ways to restore piety, learning, and purity. He took pains to revive the intercourse between the English and foreign Churches, which had rather fallen off of late; and this time, instead of foreigners learning from the English, as they had done in the days of Charles the Great, and earlier, the English were glad to learn from them. Many rules for the conduct of the clergy were put forth while Edgar was king, some of which were very good ones. The priests were bidden to take care of their churches, and give all their time to their sacred work. They were not to indulge in idle speech, idle deeds, or excessive drinking; nor were they to hunt, hawk, or dice. They were not to be boastful, or "to put another to shame for his ignorance, but to teach him better." Nor were the high-born to despise the low-born. They were to distribute alms, and to urge the people to be charitable; they were also to be diligent in teaching the young. They were to preach every Sunday to the people, and always to give good examples. Some of the old English sermons still remain, and are very earnest and interesting.

15. The Romish Church does not now encourage the reading of the Bible; we scarcely ever see a Bible in a Roman Catholic country; but at this time, though the English were under the Pope, a great deal was thought of studying the Bible. Although Alfred and his friends do not seem to have translated it, yet very soon after their time translations were begun, some of which are still existing. One of the translators said in his preface, that he turned it from Latin into English "for the edification of the simple, who only know this speech, that it may easier teach the heart of those who hear and read it."

16. Some of their poetry and history is also very religious. This is part of a poem about King Edgar:—

"He was widely among nations
greatly honoured;
because he honoured
God's name zealously,
and on God's name meditated

oft and frequently,
and God's praise exalted
wide and far."

Then it goes on to speak of his faults (which in his great patriotism the poet thinks he learned from foreigners—outlandish men), and ends—

"But may God grant him
that his good deeds
be more prevailing
than his misdeeds
for his soul's protection
on the longsome journey."

And he writes thus about Edgar's death:—

"Here ended the joys of earth,
Edgar of Angles king;
chose him another light
beauteous and winsome,
and left this frail,
this barren life."

This does not sound quite like poetry, or at least like verse, but, for one thing, it is a translation from the old English of our fathers; moreover, they did not make poetry as we do, at that time. They had no rhymes, nor did they count the syllables; everything depended on the emphasis with which it was read or repeated. The words which were to be emphatic, to be leant upon, were generally made to begin with the same letter.

17. With all this religious feeling they were very superstitious. They shared heartily in the enthusiastic veneration then paid to relics. There is a list of relics which were kept in one church; it is said they were presented to it by Ethelstane the Glorious. Amongst them were a piece of the actual cross; of the burning bush; of the Virgin's dress; some of St. Paul's bones; St. Andrew's stick; the finger of Mary Magdalene, &c., &c. Some time afterwards an abbot of Peterborough went to a very poor monastery in Normandy and bought the whole body of a saint, except his head, for £500.

**Super-
stitions.**

18. These we may call Christian superstitions; but they had a great many others too, which had, it is likely, lasted on from the old heathen times. Indeed, though the people were now all nominally Christians, they seem to have been converted in a very wholesale way, numbers of the common people following the

example of their kings and nobles, and being baptized when they were. If a man was baptized he was supposed to be a Christian; but he probably still had some kind of belief in the old gods and goddesses. In the reigns of many of the kings, even after this time, we find special laws forbidding heathenism. They believed in wizards and witches, who had curious ceremonies with trees and stones; something, perhaps, like those of the old Druids.

19. We always laugh when we hear of witches now; but it was no laughing matter in those days, nor for hundreds of years afterwards. If a person fell ill, and could not tell

Witches. what was the matter with him, very likely he and his friends thought he was bewitched; that is, they thought some person, who was his enemy, perhaps living at a distance, had cast a charm over him, and was secretly and mysteriously causing him to waste away. That would be a very horrible idea; for they did not know how to work against such illnesses, and probably many people would die of mere depression. Then we can imagine how they would hate the supposed witch, and how many a perfectly harmless person would be accused. On the other hand, they believed that angels sometimes helped in curing diseases. There is an account of one person who had a bad knee, which the doctor could not cure till an angel advised the use of a particular kind of poultice. They also thought that witches could do other mischief, as destroying cattle, and raising storms and tempests.

20. The method they had of testing whether a person was a witch or not was what they called trial by ordeal. This sort of judgment was used not only in cases of witchcraft, but in

The ordeal. other trials. Instead of doing as we do, hearing the evidence of all the people who know anything about the matter, and striving in every way to find out the truth, they imagined they could learn it by curious and horrid experiments. One way was to throw the reputed witch into a pond or stream, and see if she would sink or swim. Unfortunately, in this particular trial, it was said that if she were innocent she would sink, but if guilty she would float, because a body with an evil spirit in it is lighter than water, so that the poor creature got very little chance of escape either way. Even now one sometimes hears, in very secluded and ignorant country places, of some poor old woman being "ducked for a witch;" this was the beginning of the practice.

21. Another way of trying by ordeal was to lay nine burning-hot ploughshares on the ground, and bring the suspected person

barefoot and blindfold to walk over them. If he chanced to step over them or among them unhurt he was said to be innocent; but if he got burnt, then he was guilty. Another way was to carry a piece of hot iron in the hand, or to dip the hand in boiling water; if the person was much hurt he was guilty, but if not he was innocent. All this sounds truly absurd to us, but the original meaning of it is not so absurd. In doing these things they intended to be appealing to God to show the truth. The ceremonies began with prayers; the person who was to be tried fasted and received the sacrament beforehand; in fact, it was a solemn and religious affair. We know now that God does not interfere in this manner to reveal truths, but leaves us to use our best judgment and conscience; but at that time people thought God did constantly interfere in human affairs; and, doubtless, many an innocent person appealed to the ordeal in full trust that his innocence would be shown forth, and many a one must have been bitterly disappointed.

22. A great deal was also made of lucky and unlucky days (perhaps this is not quite out of date either). There were certain days when it would be dangerous to bleed people; others when it was bad to sow seeds, or to tame animals, or to begin a business; and other days when it was fortunate to do any of those things. "Whatever you see at the first appearance of the new moon will be a blessing to you." "If a man dreams that he hath a burning candle in his hand it is a sign of good." "If New Year's Day be on a Monday it will be a grim and confounding winter." All this must have made it very difficult to carry on the business of life; people always felt at the mercy of mysterious powers over which they had no control.

23. It was believed, and this belief also went on for many centuries, that eclipses of the sun and moon, and comets foretold great and generally dreadful events. It is hardly correct, however, to say comets, for most of them **Eclipses and comets.** thought there was only one such—"the star called Cometa," which made its appearance on special occasions. It is rather amusing to see the gravity and wisdom with which they write on this subject. Ethelwerd, who has been mentioned before, who belonged to the royal family, and was remarkably well educated for a layman, says that in a certain year, "after Easter, a comet appeared, which some think to be an omen of foul times which have already past; *but it is the most approved theory of philosophers that they foretell future things, as has been tried in many ways.*"

LECTURE XII.—THE UNREADY.

The sons of Edgar. The battle of Maldon. Tribute to the Danes. Massacre of St. Briuswend. Ethelred's flight. Normandy and the Normans. Edmund Ironside.

1. **EDGAR THE PEACEABLE** was only thirty-two years old when he died. He left two young sons: Edward, by his first wife, and Ethelred by the second. There is very little doubt that the beautiful and wicked Elfrida caused her step-son Edward to be murdered, in order that her own boy Ethelred might be king. Edward, though only seventeen at the time of his death, had given promise of being a good and wise king, but we cannot see that he was in any sense a martyr, as he was afterwards called by the pity of the people.

2. Unfortunately for the country, the next king, for whose sake Edward was murdered, and who was the weakest and most unkingly sovereign England had ever known, had a very long reign of thirty-eight years. This was the second Ethelred, "the noble in counsel." His surname, very unlike the high-sounding ones of those who went before him, the Magnificent or the Excellent, was "the Unready." It is a very good and apt name even as we understand it; but it really meant "the uncounselled" or unwise—"red" meaning "counsel;" so that it was a kind of play upon his real name.

3. He was quite a young boy, only ten years old, when he became king, and the troubles began almost directly. We hear no more now of the great fleet which used to sail round the island every year, in Edgar's time, to keep invaders off. The Danes began to land again, and ravage and plunder as of old. Southampton was ravaged, and Thanet-land, and Cheshire; soon after, Portland and Dorsetshire. After that there were a few years of peace; then they came to Somersetshire, and then to Ipswich and to Essex. Ethelred was by this time a grown young man, twenty-two years old—just the same age that Alfred

was when he fought the battle of Ashdune. But how different was he from Alfred! He did not come to lead his men to fight the heathen robbers. He left them to fight without him. Though the king was not there, however, when the Danes came to Essex, there was a brave alderman and a splendid fight; but, alas! the alderman was killed, and the Danes conquered.

4. It is worth while to learn something about this battle, of which we have the description in one of the finest of our old English poems. For one thing, it is interesting to notice how different the way of fighting was in those days from what it is at present. Now that we have cannon and gunpowder, a great deal of the fighting is done from a long way off; the guns carry such an immense distance that the soldiers can hardly see those whom they are killing. But at that time it was hand-to-hand fighting, and every man's own courage and skill were tested. It is now judged best for the general of an army to be a little out of the fray, perhaps standing on a hill with a telescope, overlooking the whole, and sending his officers and aides-de-camps galloping with his orders and messages in all directions where it is necessary. In those days the armies were not nearly so large, and the generals of the English always fought on foot with their men. They would come to the field on horseback, and then dismount.

991.
The battle of
Maldon.

5. The alderman or earl who led the fight at Maldon was named Brihtnoth. This was the man whose wife had his great deeds worked in needlework on a tapestry. The last of those deeds was this fight for his country, in which he was killed. He rode to the field on horseback, and set his army in array—"trimmed his warriors," as the poet calls it. He rode round and "rede gave," that is, gave advice how they should stand, and keep steady, and hold their shields firm, and "at nothing frightened be." Then he got off his horse, and went and stood among his own special followers. Just as a king had his chosen friends and comrades who followed him to danger and glory, and whose most sacred duty was to defend and honour him, so had a great earl or alderman too; and if the leader were brave and noble these followers were devoted to him through life and death.

6. Brihtnoth then, when he had fairly trimmed the army, went and stood "among the men that to him dearest were"—his faithful hearth-bands; men that had often feasted round his hearth, and to whom he had given rich rewards, such as they most prized: horses, and bracelets, and rings. Some of them

were young noblemen, his own relations ; but, at least, one was a churl—a brave fellow, as brave as all the rest. Now they were all ready to fight ; the English on the one side, the heathen Danes on the other. But first the Danes, or Vikings, as they are sometimes called, sent a herald or messenger to the earl. The message was that the earl and the other rich men had better make peace by sending to the enemy bracelets and money. If they would agree to that, then the Danes would go to their ships again. We can easily guess what answer the brave old Englishman made. He was very angry ; he shook his spear, but he answered steadfastly, “Hearest thou, seafarer, what this folk sayeth ? they will give you for money spears and sharp-edged swords. Go back again, messenger, to thy people, and tell them that here stand undaunted an earl with his band that will defend this our land. Nor shall ye so easily win our treasures ; point and edge (*i. e.* spear and sword) shall judge between us first ere we money give.”

7. So then the fight began, the shouting, the rush, and the tumult. The man who wrote the poem must, one thinks, have been there to hear, for he tells it so vividly ; he tells, too, how the eagles and ravens gathered round, expecting the feast they would have on the dead bodies. At last the brave earl was wounded, but he still went on fighting with his men around him. He killed one or two more of the enemies, and “then was the earl blithe ; the brave man laughed and gave thanks to his Maker.” But at length he was so badly wounded that he could no longer hold his sword nor stand fast on his feet. He died as a brave and good man should ; he spoke a word of encouragement to his comrades, and then he turned to God. These were his last words, very nearly as the song gives them : “I thank Thee, Ruler of nations, for all the good things that, in this world, I have enjoyed. Now I own, mild Maker, that I most have need that Thou shouldest grant good to my spirit, that my soul may now make its way to Thee, may journey in peace to Thy kingdom, Lord of angels. I pray Thee that the fiends of hell may never hurt it.” Then he died, and a great fight took place over his body.

8. The Danes wanted to take his robe, his bracelets, and his rings, and to mangle his body. His own men were resolved at least to save his body. Some of them were killed ; two of them fled : this was considered beyond words disgraceful. As the poem says, “Godric from the battle went, and forsook the good man who had often given him horses.” He even went so far as

to leap on the earl's own horse and ride away on it, so that those who did not know thought it was the earl himself fleeing, and it was, perhaps, through that that the battle was finally lost.

9. But these two were the only cowards. When the rest of his hearth-comrades saw that their lord lay dead, they all then wished for one of two things—they would either die or avenge the loved one. One bold young fellow started forward and reminded them how they had often made gallant and boastful speeches as they sate feasting and drinking mead; then they were "heroes in hall," but now there was hard fight all round, and now they would know who was a real hero. Another was an old man, who said, "I am old of life, and hence I will not stir; I intend to lie by the side of my lord, of such a loved man." Then another and another said they would lie dead by the side of their lord sooner than yield or flee. One of them said he had agreed with his lord before they came to battle that they would both ride home together safe and victorious, or both lie dead on the field, and now he meant to keep his word.

10. In spite of all their heroism the battle was lost, but the enemy could not carry off the body of the earl. He was buried at Ely, where there was a great monastery to which he had given many gifts, and to which his widow presented the famous needle-work with the story of his life.

11. The description of this battle gives us a splendid idea of the fidelity and devotion which brave men felt for a good lord. It shows too how much depended on whether their chief was in truth a valiant and heroic man worthy of their trust. Though the Danes gained the victory in this fight, it was a hard-won victory, and they would not have won many such. We are now going to hear of great misfortunes and disgraces which befell the English. Nearly all of them came from the bad leaders they had. Had their king been like Alfred, had their earls been like Brihtnoth, the history would have been very different.

12. The king and his counsellors could think of no better way of getting rid of the enemies than by paying them. We saw how Brihtnoth scorned the idea of giving money or anything but good blows with spears and swords. But in this very same year we read in the 'Chronicle,' "It was first decreed that tribute should be paid to the Danish men on account of the great terror which they caused by the sea-coast; that was at first £10,000," a very large sum at that time. It was easy to guess what would come of this new plan. As soon as the Danes had spent the money

991.
Ethelred
bribes the
Danes.

they were sure to come back for more, and so they did. And thus it went on all through the Unready's reign.

13. Sometimes when the Danes came, the king and the people attempted to resist them, but very seldom to any purpose. Some of the great earls turned traitors and sided with the Danes, or just when a great battle was beginning, they would flee away with their followers. It must be remembered, as partly explaining this, that some of these very earls were naturalized Danes, and had relations among the enemy's host. Others had probably married Danish ladies.

14. Then the king would try to make peace by paying great sums of money to the Danes. A few more extracts from the 'Chronicle' will show how miserably everything was managed or mismanaged.

"1001. The army (that is, the Danes) went over the land and did as was their wont, slew and burned; . . . it was then in every wise sad, because they never ceased from their evil.

"1002. In this year the king and his witan resolved that tribute should be paid, and peace made with them, on condition that they should cease from their evil . . . And that they then accepted, and were paid £24,000.

"1006. At midwinter the people of Winchester might see an insolent and fearless army, as they went by their gate to the sea, and fetched them food and treasures, over fifty miles from the sea. Then was there so great awe of the (Danish) army that no one could think or devise how they should be driven from the country. . . . They had cruelly marked every shire in Wessex with burning and with harrying. The king then began with his witan earnestly to consider what might seem most advisable to them all, so that this country might be protected ere it was totally undone." They decided, as usual, on nothing better than paying tribute again. This time it was £36,000; another time, later on, £48,000.

15. If they ever did try to get a fleet or an army together everything went wrong; some of the leaders were foolish, others treacherous. After a disaster at sea, in which some

**Misery of
England.**

ships had been wrecked, "beat and thrashed all to pieces," the chronicler writes in a sort of despair, "it was as if all counsel was at an end, and the king and the aldermen and the high witan went home, and let the toil of all the nation lightly perish." Another year, when they had got a force or army together, and the force was wanted to oppose the

Danes' landing, "then the force went home; and when the Danes were east then was our force held west, and when they were south then was our force north. At last there was not a chief man left who would gather a force, but each fled as he best might; nor even at last would any shire assist another. All these calamities befell us through evil counsels. For all this peace and tribute, they went everywhere in flocks and harried our miserable people, and robbed and slew them."

16. This gives us a sort of general picture of the reign of Ethelred; but there is one exception to all the cowardice and blundering. It is very interesting to see how brave the Londoners were. Even at this time, 900 years

London.

ago, London was a large and important city. Not, of course, that it was nearly as large as it is now. In places now crowded with streets and squares there were green fields and woods. In other parts there were wild fens and moors, which have given their names to Fenchurch Street, Moorgate Street, and Moorfields. But London is now so huge and enormous that there is no other such city in the world; and though small then to what it is now, it was thriving and busy, and, for those times, a large city. It was already a great place for merchants. The Romans had given it a Latin name, "Augusta," but that dropped off, and the old British name of London has lasted on through all these years. King Alfred had rescued it from the Danes, and built a fort to protect it, where the Tower of London now stands. The Londoners must have been fine fellows; they were brave, rich, and free; and though the Danes came against them and set upon them again and again, they were beaten back by the citizens. London seems to have been besieged in vain four times during this reign.

17. The heathen had now two great leaders, one the King of Norway, and one the King of Denmark. Olaf, the King of Norway, had a curious history, for it seems that while he was in the British Isles he learnt Christianity. Some think it was in the Isles of Scilly, others

Olaf and
Swend.

in the Isles of Orkney. Whoever wrote the history perhaps did not know his geography very well. Wherever it might be, he was baptized; and after one of the tribute-payings and truces of Ethelred he was confirmed by some of the English bishops, and was received in a very friendly and royal manner by Ethelred, who gave him handsome presents. He then "promised, as he also fulfilled, that he would never come again with hostility to England." He had Christianity enough to keep his word. He

went back to Norway, and spent the rest of his life, it appears, in converting his kingdom to his new religion, though he did this in a very harsh and cruel way. But we have no more to do with him in English history.

18. The other king, Swend or Swegen the Dane, was not so easily got rid of. He went away for a time when Olaf did, but he afterwards came back; we cannot say without provocation, for Ethelred, who in general could think of nothing better than paying tribute, at last bethought him of another plan, as unwise as it was wicked. This was no other than a general massacre of all the Danes in England, though there was now a peace between them and the English. What special provocation, if any, they had given, is not very clear. The 'Chronicle' says, "It had been made known to the king that they would plot against his life, and afterwards those of all his witan," but we do not know how

**1002.
Massacre of
the Danes.**

far it is true. It appears, however, that the king sent letters secretly through the country to appoint all the massacres to take place on the same day, and as all the English heartily hated the Danes, these orders were obeyed. Among the Danes who were killed was a lady, Swend's sister, who was in England with her husband and son. It is said that these two were killed before her eyes, and that when she herself was dying she prophesied that great woes and vengeance would come upon the English.

19. And next year the prophecy began to be fulfilled. Swend came back again to avenge his sister and his countrymen, and the sacking and burning went on as before for many

**1003.
The Danes'
revenge.**

years. Some time after this the Danes besieged Canterbury and took it. They seized on the archbishop, who appears to have been a very good man, one of those who confirmed Olaf. They took him to their ships, which were lying in the Thames near Greenwich, and kept him prisoner there from about Michaelmas till the following Easter, expecting a good ransom would be paid for him.

**1012.
Murder
of the
archbishop.**

But on the Saturday after Easter they were "greatly excited against the bishop because he would not promise them any money, but forbade that anything should be given for him." He would not have the poor people, who were already so miserable and so heavily taxed, harassed any more to get money for him. The 'Chronicle' says the Danes were very drunken; they took him to Greenwich "and shamefully murdered him; they pelted him with bones and the skulls of oxen, and one of them struck him

on the head with an axe, so that with the dint he sank down, and his holy blood fell on the earth, and his holy soul he sent forth to God's kingdom." He was first buried in London, where, says the 'Chronicle,' "God now manifests the holy martyr's miracles." And the principal church in Greenwich, St. Alphege, was named after him; but a few years afterwards his body was carried to his own church at Canterbury with all honour, as we shall see.

20. It was not Swend who took Canterbury; he was not in England just then; but the next year he returned with a splendid fleet, and bringing with him his son Cnut (or Canute). They say his ships were beautifully adorned with figures of men and animals, birds and dragons, lions, bulls, and dolphins, in gold, silver, and amber. After some fearful cruelties and very little resistance from anybody except the Londoners he mastered everything and everybody, and was actually acknowledged king of England.

21. Thus at last the Danes conquered, after all these hundreds of years' fighting. Even London had now to submit. The queen, Ethelred's wife, fled over the sea; then the two young princes, her sons, followed, and next year Ethelred himself. 1013.
The Danes triumph.

22. We must pause here to learn a little of the place and people to whom they fled, because we shall have to hear a great deal more about them by and bye. Queen Emma was a foreign lady, the daughter of the Duke of Normandy. The Normans. This country is of course part of France, but yet the Normans were not really Franks, nor were they Gauls or Celts; they were in fact very near relations to the English and to the Danes. Just as the Danes used to come plundering to England, and at last settled down in parts of the country, and gradually became Englishmen, so they also went plundering to France, and at last settled down there and became Frenchmen. Only they were not called "Danes," but Northmen, which was really a better name, as they were not nearly all from Denmark; many came also from Sweden and from Norway.

As Alfred made peace with Guthorm, and let him rule as an under-king in a great part of England, the king of the French made peace with the leader of the Northmen, and let him settle down in a part of France, which came to be called Normandy, and the Northmen Normans. After settling there they became Christians, and, dropping their old speech, learnt to talk French, which was a much greater change than for those in England to

learn to speak English. The Duke of Normandy was under the French king; he was his vassal, and though not called "king," he was in fact as powerful as one.

23. Ethelred, then, had married Emma, the daughter of one of the dukes of Normandy, who was what we may call a French lady. When she came to England she had to receive a new name, because "Emma" sounded so outlandish and foreign. She was called by the old English name of *Elfgifu* (the fairies' gift), which sounds rather outlandish and foreign to us now. So, in their trouble, she and her husband and children took refuge with her brother the Duke of Normandy, her father being dead by this time, and there the two young princes were educated.

24. But Ethelred did not stay long in Normandy; Swend had hardly been made king before he died. There is a singular tale

1014.
Death of
Swend.

about his death. We all remember St. Edmund, the under-king of East Anglia, whom the Danes had so cruelly murdered nearly 150 years before. It seems that Swend had a special hatred for his memory, and to show it he demanded a heavy tribute from the church which had been built in his honour at Bury St. Edmund's. He threatened if it were not paid he would burn the church and the town, and put the clergy to death by torture. He had even set forth on his march for this purpose, like Saul, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," when he saw in a vision the martyred Edmund coming against him, clothed in armour, and a spear in his hand. "Help," he cried, "fellow-soldiers! St. Edmund is coming to slay me." He fell from his horse and died the same night, every one believing that the saint had pierced him with his spear. It is easy to see how this story might arise and be spread abroad in all good faith. Swend might have been already ill and half delirious when he set forth. He very likely partly believed in Christianity, and in his excitement thought he beheld the figure of the saint; and his followers, who all heard his cry, would readily believe in those days that it was a real vision and a real miracle.

25. When he was dead, leaving only his young son of nineteen behind him, the English thought of Ethelred again, and sent after him to Normandy. The 'Chronicle' tells of the messages they exchanged. The wise men said that "to them no lord was dearer than their natural lord, if he would rule them better than he had done before."

Ethelred
returns.

Ethelred, in return, sent messages to "greet all his people, and said that he would be to them a kind lord, and amend all those things which they abhorred, and all the things should be forgiven which had been done or said to him, on condition that they all, with one mind, and without treachery, would turn to him." So he returned home to his own people, and was gladly received by all.

26. He really seems now to have done his best. There was a great meeting of the witan, where they made many good and pious resolutions; and then he marched against young Cnut, and drove him away for the time. Ethelred lived but two years longer; and he had a brave and noble son to help him now. This was not one of Emma's children,—we shall hear more of them in due time,—but a son of **Edmund Ironside.** Ethelred by his first wife—Edmund, who was surnamed Ironside because of his strength and courage. He was indeed a contrast to his feeble father. He went about in the most wonderfully energetic way, gathering armies and trying to put some spirit into the disheartened people.

27. Cnut soon came back again with another splendid fleet, and the war went on. Ethelred fell back into being as weak and wavering as ever. Cnut gained great victories, and when Ethelred died, which he happily did at **1016.** last, the assembly of the witan chose Cnut to be **Cnut.** king. But the Londoners had something to say to that; they held an assembly of their own, and elected Edmund Ironside. So there were two kings, an Englishman and a Dane; both of them young, clever, brave, and neither of them likely to give in to the other. Now followed seven months, in which London was besieged three times by the Danes, but never taken; and in which the English and Danes had six great battles. Four times at least out of these Edmund Ironside won the victory; but in the sixth, after a gallant fight, the Danes were victorious, and Edmund had to flee. He was not at all out of heart; he was quite ready for a seventh battle, with a fresh army, when the "wise men" interposed and brought about a peace.

28. The two young kings met. They had by this time each seen something to respect in the other, and both must have felt that it would be no easy matter fully to conquer and subdue the other. So they behaved with great courtesy, called each other brothers, and agreed to divide the kingdom between them. Edmund had all England south of the Thames, East Anglia.

Essex, and London. Cnut had all the rest ; but it seems that Edmund was to be his "over-lord."

29. This did not last, for before the year was over the brave Edmund, the last worthy descendant of Egbert and Alfred, died. How he died is not exactly known. Some said he was murdered ; some think he was worn out by his almost superhuman exertions. But when he died Cnut the Dane became king of all England.

1016.
Death of
Edmund.

LECTURE XIII.—CNUT.

A Danish king—his fierce beginning—his reform—his religion—pilgrimage to Rome—his letter—his sons.

1. CNUT did not wish to appear a usurper, or one who had taken a kingdom to which he had no right; nor did he wish only to seem a conqueror, having seized on the kingdom by force. There were no strict rules then, as 1016. there are now, about who should succeed to the throne. If the king when he died left a brave son already grown up, it was almost sure he would be chosen, as Alfred's son Edward was; but if he left only young children, then one of their uncles would very likely be made king instead. In those days, as we have seen in the last reign, it was of the very greatest importance to have a king who was a real leader and ruler. The fortunes of all the people much depended on him and his personal character. In our days this does not matter nearly so much. The Houses of Parliament, and the ministers in whom they have confidence, and whom we may say they really appoint, govern the country, make the laws, and lay on the taxes. The king or queen cannot do anything without their good-will. It is still a very happy thing for the country to have a good and wise king or queen, because they have great influence, and by their example lead the people to some extent; as our queen all through her reign has set an example of a good and pure life, and so has had a thoroughly beneficial influence; while a bad, selfish, and immoral sovereign would set a bad example, and have a thoroughly evil influence. But neither one nor the other could make or unmake laws, or lay on taxes, or govern in any way according to their own will or pleasure.

2. In these old times the king had indeed to consult his witan or wise men; but in general it seems that he made all the plans, proposed the laws, and laid them before the wise men to discuss, and approve or disapprove. This is why it was better in those days to have no hard and fast rule as to which of the royal family

should be king, because it left the power of choosing him who was likely to be the wisest and best ruler. The king himself often pointed out whom he wished to succeed him, and this was considered to give him a certain claim. In the present day it is fixed quite clearly that the eldest son and his eldest son succeed to the throne; or if he have no son, then his daughter. Our own queen was a young girl of eighteen when she came to the throne, although she had grown-up uncles. This would not have happened at the time we are speaking of now; no doubt she would have been passed over, and a strong man made king. But in our day it did not matter; the government of the country went on just as well.

3. The English then were accustomed to elect their kings, though always hitherto they had been chosen from their own royal family, and until the time of Swend it was a most unheard-of thing for a man not of that family, not even an Englishman at all, to be king of England. But Cnut, who had already half the kingdom, would not appear to take forcible possession of the rest. He assembled the wise men, and laid his claim before them. There were several princes of the English royal family left, though Edmund Ironside was dead. He had left two little sons, but no one would be likely to wish to make one of them king. He had also left some brothers—one of them, Edwy (or Eadwig), a grown young man of high character and well esteemed; beside his two half-brothers, Edward and Alfred, who were still very young, and were being brought up in Normandy.

4. Even if the wise men had wished to make Edwy king they would hardly have dared to propose it, Cnut being so powerful; but perhaps they had grown tired of all the endless wars, and thought it best to give in at last. At any rate they passed over all these princes, ethelings, as they were called, and declared that Cnut had a right to the whole kingdom.

5. In the beginning of his reign Cnut showed a very fierce and cruel spirit. He was determined to be and to remain king of England; and though he had been elected by the witan, he could not be easy while so many of the royal family remained alive. If not dangerous now, he felt that they might be so by and bye. Still he did not exactly like to appear as an open murderer. He outlawed the grown-up prince Edwy, and before the year was past he died; it was reported that Cnut had him privately murdered. He sent Edmund Ironside's little sons out of the country to his

**Cnut's
cruelties.**

own half-brother, the King of Sweden, in order that he might privately make away with them. But the Swedish king had pity on the innocent children, and instead of killing them sent them off to the distant land of Hungary, where there was a very good king, Stephen, who was afterwards called St. Stephen. He received the children kindly, and brought them up well and honourably. One died young, but the other grew up and married a relation of the Queen of Hungary, named Agatha, and he lived to see England once more.

6. Cnut next put to death some of the English noblemen ; we cannot exactly say why ; but probably he thought they would in some way endanger his throne. And about the same time he sent for Queen Emma, the widow of Ethelred the Unready, and married her. She was much older than he was, but they say she was very beautiful. It seems that she now quite forsook her two sons Edward and Alfred, who continued in Normandy ; and she and Cnut agreed that if she had a son by him he should succeed to the throne of England, and so it afterwards was.

7. But though Cnut began his reign in this cruel manner, and might have been expected to be a very bad king, it turned out quite differently. An Italian author, who hundreds of years after this time wrote a clever but wicked book called 'The Prince,' gives advice to kings and rulers how to govern. One piece of advice is that they should "do all their cruelties at first," because then afterwards people will feel so thankful to them if they are merciful and just. Whether Cnut had any idea such as that in his head, or whether his character **He reforms.** really improved, is not quite clear, but the latter appears most probable. He was professedly a Christian, and had been already baptized ; and after this terrible beginning we hear no more of cruelty in England.

8. One might have expected that he would set up his Danish followers above the English ; but no—he favoured the English in every way. He sent away almost all his ships and their crews back again to Denmark, and he assembled the English witan to consult upon the government of the country. There were already many Danes established in England, who continued to live there peaceably, and both these Danes and the English looked back to the time when they had last had a good king, peace, justice, and order, and longed to be governed as they had been then. This good king to whom they all looked back was Edgar the Peaceable, who, as was mentioned, had been just and kind to the Danes, as well as to the English.

Now his memory was honoured, and both Danes and English wished to be governed by "Edgar's law." Cnut and the wise men agreed to their desire. Cnut was as just to the English as Edgar had been to the Danes; and now England had peace for sixteen years.

9. At this time we first begin to hear of Earl Godwine, an Englishman, whom we shall meet again afterwards. Cnut seems

to have liked and favoured him very much, and he became in time the most powerful subject in all England. Nobody quite knows who he was to begin with, or who his father was. One story is that his father was a wealthy churl or farmer in Gloucestershire. Some time during the wars a Danish earl, Cnut's brother-in-law, who was going to the Danish ships, lost his way. He met a handsome young man driving cattle, and asked him to guide him to the sea. The young man said it would be very dangerous to do that, for the English were much enraged against the Danes, but he would try to do what he could. The Danish earl offered him a gold ring, but he would not accept it until he had earned it, and he said that if he succeeded the earl might reward him at his pleasure. So he took the earl home to his father's house, which was a plain, comfortable dwelling, with plenty of good food and drink. The earl was much pleased with everything and everybody, and stayed there all the next day, and at night he and the young man started off on two good horses to find their way to the ships. After riding all night they arrived safely at the shore, and the earl was so delighted with his young guide, who was a clever and pleasant talker as well as good-looking, that he adopted him almost as a son. He presented him to Cnut, and in time he rose to great honour, and married the earl's sister. This young man was Godwine, whom we find in great trust and favour during the reign of Cnut.

10. Cnut not only favoured the English nobles at home, he even made the Danish people jealous by appointing English clergymen to be bishops in Denmark. He was king of that country as well as of England, and afterwards got possession of Norway and Sweden also, but he always liked England best.

11. He now showed himself a very zealous Christian, according to the ideas of those times. He built a fine church or minster at Assandun, the place of his sixth battle with Edmund Ironside, where he had won the victory.

Cnut's
religion.

He was also very anxious to appease the saints and

martyrs whom his people had killed. One of these was St. Edmund, who was supposed to have caused the death of Swend, Cnut's father. Cnut, no doubt, fully believed that tale; so he repaired and greatly favoured the minster of Bury St. Edmund, which his father had been about to destroy; and he also restored and enriched another in honour of St. Benedict. Old Sir Richard Baker says he built "the abbey of St. Benet's, which saint he greatly revered, and in Suffolk the monastery of St. Edmund, which saint he deadly feared." He also paid great honour to St. Elfheah, or Alphege, that Archbishop of Canterbury whom the Danes killed at Greenwich. He had been buried at St. Paul's in London; but now his body was carried, with great glory and ceremony, back to the mother-church at Canterbury. The 'Chronicle' says, "The renowned king, and the archbishop, and the suffragan bishops, and earls, and very many men in orders, and also laymen, conveyed in a ship his holy body on the Thames to Southwark; . . . and they then, with an honourable band and winsome joy, conveyed him to Rochester. Then, on the third day, came Emma, the lady, with her royal child, Harthacnut, and they then all, with great magnificence, and bliss, and song of praise, conveyed the holy archbishop into Canterbury." And there he was buried, and many people used to go and pray at his tomb.

12. Cnut also went to do honour to the grave of Edmund Ironside. He had been buried at Glastonbury, where the first little Christian church had been built by the Britons, and where Dunstan had afterwards raised a much finer one. We are told that Cnut knelt and prayed beside Edmund's tomb, and covered it with a splendid robe, beautifully embroidered with peacocks. (It would have been more to the purpose had he shown kindness to poor Edmund's little sons, but they were safe in Hungary by this time.)

13. Cnut, like Alfred, was fond of hearing Church music. It is said that one of his favourite monasteries was Ely, where Alderman Brihtnoth was buried, and that one day, as he was going past it in a boat, he heard the monks singing, and was so pleased that he could not resist making a poem about it. This is a translation of the first verse:—

"Merrily sang the monks of Ely
As Cnut the king was passing by.
'Row to the shore, men,' said the king,
'And let us hear these churchmen sing.'"

We cannot say this is very beautiful poetry, but it appears to

have been much liked at the time, for it is reported that it was afterwards sung in churches as a hymn. Perhaps this was done as a little flattery. We all know the story of Cnut and his flatterers by the seaside; but there is another tale about him which, if true, shows that at one time, at any rate, he liked praise and admiration. A poet, or minstrel, had made a short poem about the king, and went to sing or repeat it to him. He found the king just finishing dinner, the very time when a minstrel or gleeman would be most welcome. But he had around him a crowd of his subjects, who were come to make complaints and ask for justice. The king listened very patiently to them all (which shows his love for justice, and that, as he afterwards said, he never spared himself any trouble for the good of his people). The poet at last grew tired of waiting, and begged the king to listen to his song, which was but a short one. Upon that the king turned to him very angrily, saying, "Are you not ashamed to do what no one else has dared to do—to write a *short* poem about me? Unless by dinner to-morrow you produce a poem with above thirty verses in it about me, your head shall be the penalty." Away went the poet and set to work; most likely he had never felt such zeal in his life in composing a poem; and the next day he appeared before the king with his fine long poem all ready, for which he was rewarded with fifty pieces of pure silver.

14. After doing all these things Cnut showed his religion by going on a pilgrimage. At that time, and for many years both

1031.
His pil-
grimage.

before and after, this was considered as a most pious and praise-worthy act. The root of the idea was that people considered some places in the world—places where holy people had lived or done some great act—more sacred than any others, and believed that God was more willing to listen to the prayers that were said there than to those said anywhere else. Of course they thought the most sacred place on earth was the Holy Land, and every spot in it where our Lord had been. There are, perhaps, few of us who would not love to see Bethlehem and Jerusalem, and the Sea of Galilee, and the Mount of Olives; probably it would warm our hearts, and do us a great deal of good, though we should not believe that God would listen to our prayers any the more because we had taken that long journey to make them there. But in Cnut's days to journey on a pilgrimage was thought to buy forgiveness of sins and a safe entrance into heaven.

15. It was then very difficult and even dangerous to travel all

the way to Jerusalem, but there were many other places which were also held sacred, and where it was much easier to go. There were some even in England; and we have just seen how people used to go and pray at the tomb of St. Alphege at Canterbury. But the next holiest after Palestine was Rome, where it was believed that St. Peter and St. Paul had been martyred and were buried, and where the Pope, who was looked on as the head of the Church, lived. Many kings and other people would make pilgrimages to Rome. It had also come to be the custom now for the archbishops of Canterbury and York to go to Rome to receive what was called the "pall" (a part of their sacred dress) from the Pope; this was a sort of way of doing homage to the Pope, and owning him as their head. They were made to pay a good sum of money for it too, for the Church of Rome seems always to have had a great liking for the "silver and gold" of which St. Peter had none.

16. But even this journey was somewhat dangerous, and one archbishop had died in crossing the Alps. Unless by sea, Italy cannot be entered from any part of Europe without crossing those great mountains; and the soldier or robber lords, as we may call them, would build castles on the heights, and rush down upon the merchants or pilgrims who were going to Rome with great treasures to sell, or rich offerings for the Churches, and would make them pay a heavy tax or take their things away. We can see the ruined castles now on the mountains as we go from Switzerland into Italy.

17. Cnut then, having settled his kingdom and made England very peaceable and contented, and having done the best he could to appease the English martyrs, made a pilgrimage to Rome. And while he was there he wrote a very His
letter. interesting letter to his people at home, which was addressed to the archbishops, the bishops, the great men, and all the people. In it he says that he went for two reasons: for the redemption of his sins, and for the good of his people. He says at Rome not only the Pope, but also the great German emperor, and many other princes. He tells the people that they all treated him with great honour and respect, and especially that the emperor gave him many costly presents, as gold and silver vessels, and very splendid garments. Then he says he spoke to the emperor and the others about the trouble his subjects had in getting to Rome on account of the fortified places, and the unjust tolls and exactions, and they promised that this should be put a stop to, and that the English and Danish merchants

and pilgrims should be allowed to come and go in peace and safety.

18. He had also complained to the Pope about the immense sums of money which were extorted from the archbishops, and expressed himself highly displeased at it; to which the Pope had promised that it should not happen again. Then he goes on to say what good resolutions he had made himself as to his future life, and is not too proud to own that he had done many wrong things, but says that he will endeavour "by God's help entirely to amend it." He says that he has vowed to Almighty God to govern his life rightly, to rule his kingdoms and people justly and piously, and that no one, whether rich or poor, should be oppressed or ill-used; and that he has written this letter that all his people may rejoice in his prosperity, and may know that he will never spare any trouble when he can do anything for their good. Altogether, this letter is so good, so hearty, and so sensible that, I think, the witan must have considered they never did a wiser thing than when they made Cnut king, even though he was not an Englishman.

19. Happy is the land that has no history! There is not much more to tell about the reign of Cnut. Things went on peaceably and quietly, so that there was little to write about. The farmers ploughed their lands and reaped their harvests without fear of being plundered. The merchants minded their business and made their profits, instead of being besieged and robbed. Every one enjoyed the fruit of his labours; they married and were given in marriage; they were safe, happy, and contented; and so the years passed away, and the men who wrote the 'Chronicle' could not find anything to say, except when a bishop or an abbot died, and a new one had to be appointed. The 'Chronicle' is rather dull reading just now, but it must have been much pleasanter living.

20. There is one thing, however, which is interesting. Cnut went to Scotland, and made its king do homage to him and own him as his lord, just as the former kings had done to Edward and to Edgar. This king of Scotland was uncle to Duncan. And he brought with him two other great lords, or under-princes, one of whom was Macbeth; the very Macbeth of whom Shakespeare wrote, and who murdered Duncan.

Like almost all the kings of this time, Cnut had a very short life, he died when he was but forty years old, leaving two very unworthy sons behind him, who were both kings of England for a short time.

1035.
Cnut's death.

21. We will not waste much time over them. The first was called Harold, and his surname was Harefoot, because he was a swift runner. When Harold became king it seems that the two princes in Normandy, the sons of Ethelred and Emma, began to think they might have a chance of getting back their father's kingdom. The younger of them, Alfred, came over to England, where his mother was. But he was seized with all his followers and most cruelly used ; blinded, and afterwards killed ; and the Chronicle says—

Harold
Harefoot.

“ Now is our trust in
the beloved God,
that they are in bliss,
blithely with Christ,
who were without guilt
so miserably slain.”

Harold Harefoot was very irreligious, and he took pleasure in insulting the services of the Church. He would call out his huntsmen and his dogs with great noise and bustle, and ride off hunting just at the moment when people were going to church, where he ought to have been going too. In this way he no doubt disgusted both the clergy and the people. He only reigned about four years, and then died.

22. Upon this his half-brother Harthacnut was chosen king. He was the son of Cnut and of Emma, and was at this time in Flanders with his mother, but he had been born and bred up in England. The people, therefore, hoped that he would be a good king like his father, but it turned out that he was worse even than Harold. This is the account the ‘Chronicle’ gives of him. “Then was Harthacnut sent after at Bruges ; it was imagined to be well done. And he then came hither with sixty ships before Midsummer, and imposed a very heavy contribution, so that it was borne with difficulty ; . . . and then was every one unfavourable to him who before had desired him ; nor did he perform ought kingly while he reigned. He caused the dead Harold to be dragged up, and had him cast into a fen.” But the Danes afterwards took the body of Harold and laid it in a burying-ground they had, where now stands the church of St. Clement Danes.

1040.
Harthacnut.

23. Harthacnut exasperated and enraged the people very much by laying on them a very heavy tax, called the Danegeld. This tax had been begun by Ethelred the Unready, to pay his tribute to the Danes, and perhaps it was partly for that reason that it was always looked on as a most hateful tax. Some of the people

now rebelled and would not pay it. Then Harthacnut sent his soldiers to ravage the land and kill the people, and so made himself still more detested than before.

24. The only good thing to be said about him is, that he seems to have had some natural affection for his half-brothers; the two princes who had been brought up in Normandy. He was very angry at the cruel murder of poor Alfred, and accused Earl Godwine of having a hand in it. Godwine most solemnly swore that he was innocent, and a great many other lords swore it too; but to this day nobody knows whether he was so or not; some think one way, and some another. To please and pacify the king, he made him a splendid present. He knew how proud and fond the Danes were of their ships, and how they decorated them; and he gave Harthacnut a magnificent ship, with eighty men on board, all beautifully dressed, with fine weapons, and with golden bracelets on their arms. This present so pleased the king that he accepted Godwine's oath about Alfred's death.

25. He then invited his other brother, Edward, to come over to England and live with him, which he did. After Harthacnut had reigned about two years, he went to a marriage-feast of one of his great lords. "And as he stood at his drink he fell suddenly to the earth with a terrible struggle, and then they who were nigh took hold of him, and he afterwards spoke not a word." An inglorious and disgraceful death, after an inglorious and disgraceful reign.

LECTURE XIV.—THE CONFESSOR.

Edward the Confessor. The Normans and the English. The English party and Earl Godwine. Godwine's banishment and return. Harold. Westminster Abbey.

1. Now once more a descendant of Cerdic and of Egbert sate on the throne of England. Harold and Harthacnut had left no children, and Harthacnut had evidently intended his brother Edward to be king after his own death, when he invited him to come back from Normandy and live with him. So all the people made Edward king; and he was the last king of that old royal family which had reigned so gloriously, on the whole, through those hundreds of years.

1042.
Edward the
Confessor.

2. The people, no doubt, thought they had now got rid of the foreigners, and had a real English king again; but this was not so. Though Edward was half an Englishman by birth, he was, in fact, much more a Frenchman. We shall sometimes use the words Norman and French interchangeably now; for our old histories generally call the Normans Frenchmen, and, indeed, they had by this time become so in fact. Now Edward, besides having a French mother, had been taken to Normandy when he was quite a child, and had lived there with his uncle and cousin ever since, so that he was far more like a Frenchman than an Englishman; as any of us would have been if we had been taken to live in France with near relations when quite young, had been educated there, had talked the language, and had learnt all the ways and habits of the people.

3. There was a great difference between the Normans and the English, though they were such near neighbours. We learn most about this from the writings of a man called William of Malmesbury, who had a very good knowledge of what he was saying, since his father was a Norman and his mother an Englishwoman; and he was anxious to do justice to both sides, though, on the whole, he seems to have preferred his father's race.

The English
and the
Normans.

4. The Normans were at this time in some respects more civilized than the English. They had more polished manners, and were more gay, bright, and lively. To this hour Frenchmen are considered more polite and affable than the English, who are looked on, whether justly or unjustly, as blunt and clumsy in comparison. The Normans were skilful architects, and had built many beautiful churches and minsters far superior to those of England. We hear too that they had noble and splendid houses, in which they lived temperately and frugally; "they were delicate in their food, but not excessive;" while the English lived in "mean and despicable houses," and were overfond of eating and drinking. It had long been the habit, on festive occasions, to begin dining early in the morning, and to continue drinking and revelling all day; but they had got still worse in this way latterly, for the brutal King Harthacnut, who, as we saw, died drinking, had introduced the custom of having four great meals every day, and they would sometimes pass entire nights in drinking.

5. It seems too that the English, including the clergy, had again fallen into a very ignorant state, so that "they could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacrament, and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment. The nobility, given up to luxury and wantonness, went not to church in the morning after the manner of Christians, but merely in a careless manner heard matins and masses from a hurrying priest in their chambers."

6. The same writer speaks of the degrading slave-trade which was still carried on in England, and which struck him, as well it might, with great horror. But after telling us all this about the English, their ignorance, drunkenness, &c., he says, "I would not, however, have these bad propensities universally ascribed to the English. I know that many of the clergy at that day trod the path of sanctity by a blameless life; I know that many of the laity of all ranks and conditions in this nation were well-pleasing to God. Be injustice far from this account; the accusation does not involve the whole indiscriminately."

7. Edward very naturally preferred the people he was used to, and their pleasant ways; though when he became King of England he ought to have cast that aside, and set himself to understand and love his people, as Cnut had done. But though he was a good man, and in some ways a good king, he could not help showing a great partiality to the French, which led to much trouble in his days, and

**Edward
favours the
Normans.**

to still more afterwards. A great number of Frenchmen came over to England; and Edward favoured them very much, and gave them offices and estates, so that they grew rich at the expense of the English. But above all, he promoted the French clergy, and set them over the English. He made a Frenchman Bishop of London, and another Bishop of Dorchester. We can imagine how offensive this would be to the English, who have always been noted for their jealousy of foreigners. It appears, too, that this Bishop of Dorchester, though a Frenchman, must have been quite as ignorant as an Englishman, for when he went to Rome the Pope was very near depriving him of his bishopric, or, as the 'Chronicle' puts it, "they were very near breaking his staff, *if he had not given the greater treasures*, because he could not do his offices (that is, read the prayers, &c.) as well as he should." After that the king made a Frenchman Archbishop of Canterbury, and as he who holds that office is considered the highest person in the whole kingdom, next to the king, this was also a great insult to the English.

8. Nevertheless, on the whole, Edward was much beloved. He was of a gentle and pious nature; not clever, but meek and good. He seems, too, to have been good-looking, and he had pleasant, polished manners, which he had learnt His pious and
goodness. in France. The 'Chronicle' says that though he had dwelt so long in exile, "he was aye blithe of mood," cheerful and calm. He pleased the people greatly by taking off a heavy tax which had oppressed them very much. The tale is, that one year, when it had just been collected, the king was brought to see the masses of gold. He was so struck with the sight, and with the thought of the misery it must cause the people to have so much money wrung out of them, that he fancied he saw an exulting little devil jumping about upon the casks. This story, with several others about Edward's visions and dreams, was afterwards carved in stone, as a decoration for his chapel in Westminster Abbey, where we may still see them, though so worn away with age that they are not very easy to understand. Edward was surnamed by his people the "Confessor," which meant in those days almost the same as a saint. They thought him so nearly a saint that it was believed he could work miracles, and had the gift of prophecy. His principal miracle was healing a particular disease (scrofula) by his touch, or by the patient being bathed with the water in which the king had washed his hands.

9. We saw that in old days it was believed that the king and royal family were descended from the god Woden, and thus there

was a special sacredness about them, which made them different from all other men. After Woden came to be regarded as only a man this particular sanctity was lost, but the people could not give up the idea of something supernatural belonging to their king, and they now looked upon him as being more holy than all others, through the consecration and anointing he received at his coronation,—the “holy oil” made him a man removed from all others; and this feeling went on through many centuries. As a king, long afterwards, says in Shakespeare—

“Not all the water in the rough, rude sea
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord.”

Therefore they were quite prepared to believe in miraculous powers belonging to the royal line, and from Edward's time onward it was supposed that the kings or queens of England still possessed this miraculous power. The last time we hear of it being tried in England, or rather in Scotland, was in 1745, less than 150 years ago.

10. In the play of *Macbeth* we find mention made of a “holy king” of England, and his power of curing this disease. The “holy king” is Edward the Confessor. It was during his reign that Duncan, the King of Scotland, was killed, and Macbeth made king; and that the great Earl of Northumberland afterwards fought Macbeth and set Duncan's son Malcolm on the throne of Scotland. Historians say that the story, as Shakespeare tells it, is not according to the facts; that Macbeth was not half so bad as the play makes him, and that no one knows any harm of Lady Macbeth. If so, it is rather hard upon them. The poet has so entirely made them his own, and has so enthralled us all by his art, that we can never hear their names without a thrill of awe.

11. Though the English revered their king so much, the French and they got on very ill together. William of Malmesbury, who wrote the history of this period, says he found it very difficult to get at the truth about their disagreements “on account of the natural dislike of these nations for each other—because the English disdainfully bear with a superior, and the Normans cannot endure an equal.”

12. The head of the English party was Earl Godwine, whom Cnut had made earl and governor of Wessex. By this time he was still more powerful, and it was greatly through his help and

**Disputes
between
English and
Normans.**

influence that Edward had been chosen king. His sons were now grown up, and they were made earls also, and had a great deal of power. The eldest was Earl of Herefordshire and Somersetshire; the second, Harold, was Earl of the East Angles, of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Essex. Edward was married to Godwine's daughter Edith. But, nevertheless, he seems to have hated Godwine; and he never loved Edith, though she was clever, good, and beautiful. We know that a weak man often hates the strong man who towers over him; and probably Godwine did not show much respect to the king whom he had helped to make. He was a clever and determined man, and some of his children were the same. It was thought by many of the bystanders that they treated Edward with great disrespect, and ridiculed his simplicity. Edward also, it appears, never ceased to believe that Godwine had had some hand in the murder of his brother Alfred.

13. Thus they were on very bad terms. Godwine and his sons were indignant at seeing so many foreigners favoured and promoted, and they gathered a strong party of Englishmen, who sided with them. One might be sure, in this state of things, the fire would soon break out; any spark would be enough to kindle it. And very soon the spark fell. One of the king's French friends with his men behaved insolently to the people of Dover, and when the Dover men resented it, a tumult, or rather a battle, took place, in which several men on each side were killed, but the French were driven out of the town. Edward, taking part with his friends, commanded Earl Godwine, under whose government the town of Dover lay, to punish the Dover men. But Godwine stoutly refused to do that until they had been fairly tried, and allowed to speak for themselves. Then both sides being much irritated, the king and his friends gathered an army, and Godwine and his sons did the same. But no fight took place, for when the two armies met Godwine's men dropped away from him, and he and his sons were declared outlaws, and banished from the kingdom.

14. It seems strange that the people fell away from Godwine so readily, when he was standing up for English liberty and justice, but there may have been two reasons for it: one, that they really loved the king; and the other, that Godwine's eldest son had been a very wicked and disgraceful man, a base and treacherous murderer, and yet his father had favoured him and shielded him from punishment.

1051.
Banishment
of Godwine
and his sons.

Not content with the banishment of Godwine, the king sent away his own wife Edith also, and took possession of all her treasures, her lands, her gold, and her silver, which certainly did not look very saintlike.

15. While Godwine and his sons were in exile Edward received a visit from a very important person, to whom he was much attached, his cousin, the Duke of Normandy. We shall have a great deal more to hear about him, as he had more influence on the history of our country than, perhaps, any other man in the whole world. This young cousin of Edward's, who was now about twenty-three years old, was no other than William the Conqueror. It was perhaps at this time he began to think he should like to be king of England. When he saw our beautiful country, with its thriving towns, its rich meadows and fertile fields, its industrious and clever people, he would doubtless feel it would be a fine thing to be its lord. And William was one of those strong men who, when they once set their mind on a thing, generally end by getting it. However, for this time, after being very well received, he went peaceably home again. It was said, afterwards, that during his visit Edward promised to make William his heir, but the truth of that was never known.

16. Meanwhile, we might be sure Godwine and his sons were not going to remain long in banishment. The very next year

they came back again. This time large numbers of the English took their side; they collected a great fleet and army and sailed up to London. The king also collected a fleet and an army; and there the two hosts of Englishmen stood face to face. The chronicler tells how things fell out. He says, "It was repugnant to almost all of them that they should fight against men of their own race; for there was little else there who could do anything great, except Englishmen, on each side; and they would not that this country should be the more exposed to outlandish peoples, in consequence of their destroying each other. They then resolved that wise men should be sent between them, and they settled a peace on each side."

17. This peace gave a complete triumph to Earl Godwine. "To Godwine was his earldom clean given back, as full and free

as he first possessed it; and in like manner to his sons all that they had before possessed, and to his wife and daughter, all as full and as free as they had before possessed. And they confirmed between them full friendship; and to all the people they promised good law. And they then outlawed all the Frenchmen who had before raised up unjust

1052.
Godwine's
return.

His triumph.

law, and judged unjust judgments, and counselled evil counsel in this country."

18. So then the bishops and the archbishop, and the Frenchmen in general, took flight, bag and baggage. They went off on horseback, and, to leave a pleasanter memory behind them, "slew and maltreated many young men" by the way. When they got to Walton-on-the-Naze "they there lighted on a crazy ship, and the archbishop betook himself at once over the sea, and left his pall and all Christianity here in this country, so as God willed it; as he had before obtained the dignity, so as God willed it not."

19. Now the foreigners were all gone, and England was herself again; but Godwine did not live long to enjoy his restored power and dignity, for in the following year he died. It was said, that as he sat at the Easter feast with the king, Edward brought up again the old accusation about Godwine having helped in the murder of the Etheling, Alfred; and that Godwine, calling upon God to bear witness to his innocence, exclaimed, "May this morsel of bread be my last if I had any hand in that deed;" and that, having said thus, the morsel of bread choked him, so that he fell down and died. There is no evidence that this tale is true, but it is certain that he fell down (very likely in a fit) at Edward's table.

20. After Godwine's death his second son Harold became the most powerful man in England. He seems to have been of a finer nature than his father, and less overbearing, though quite as brave and clever. The king trusted him greatly, though he was fonder of his younger brother Tostig, who was not nearly so good a man. Harold was a valiant soldier, and a skilful commander, and he gained great renown by fighting for the king in Wales. The Welsh, though they had long been under the English kings, and paid them tribute, had never heartily submitted, and they now began to rebel again under a king called Griffith. Harold led an army into Wales and conquered them, killed Griffith, and brought his head to London.

21. But soon after this a great misfortune befell him. He was at sea, near the coast of France, when his vessel was wrecked and tossed on the shore, in the dominions of a certain Count Guy, who was a vassal of the Duke of Normandy. It was the custom in those days, if any one had the misfortune to be shipwrecked on a strange coast, that instead of being kindly treated, comforted, and helped, as would now be the case, he

1053.

His death.

Harold.

was taken prisoner, and made to pay a ransom before he was allowed to depart. Accordingly, Harold was made prisoner by Guy; but he contrived to send word to the Duke of Normandy how he was being treated.

All the history of the later years of Edward the Confessor, of Harold, and of the Norman William, was represented in a series of pictures in needlework, which are still preserved at Bayeux, in Normandy, and formerly ornamented the cathedral there, of which William's brother was the bishop. An exact copy of them is to be seen in the Kensington Museum.

Though these pictures are particularly ugly and uncouth, they are very amusing and interesting to look at; and, besides, the adventures of Harold and the others tell a good deal about the ships, architecture, and costumes of the period.

22. The Duke of Normandy had quite made up his mind, by this time, that he would be king of England when his cousin Edward died, but he felt that Harold stood very much in the way. All the English loved him; and if they could not get a king of their own old royal family, they would be far more likely to choose the English Harold than the French William. William, therefore, determined to try and get Harold over to his side. He sent for him away from Count Guy, brought him to his court, and treated him with great outward kindness and respect, but would not let him go away until he had taken a

Harold's
oath.

very unfair advantage of him; for he made Harold, who was really his prisoner, take an oath that, when Edward died, he would do all in his power to help to make William king. More than this, he even cheated Harold in the very way he made him swear.

23. It is always considered that taking an oath is a more solemn thing than merely speaking and promising to tell the truth. In our times, when a man swears or takes an oath before a judge he kisses the Bible; and what is meant by that is, that he calls on God to witness that he will speak the truth. Thus there is a great solemnity about it; and many a man, who would not mind telling a lie, would feel great dread of swearing falsely, or breaking an oath.

24. Now when Harold was compelled (against his will) to swear that he would help to make William king of England, there was a book of the Gospels set on a sort of altar, covered with a splendid cloth of gold. Duke William was sitting on his throne, crowned, and with a rich sword in his hand. Around him stood his great nobles, bishops, and knights as witnesses. Harold laid his hand on the book, and very unwillingly swore.

As soon as he had taken the oath, some of the attendants lifted up the cloth of gold, and underneath was seen, not an altar, or a table, but a box or chest filled with relics and bones of saints. Harold was struck with dismay, and shuddered. Strange to say, he and all around thought the oath far more awful and sacred now than he had supposed it to be when he only swore on the New Testament; such was the feeling in those days about saints and relics. After this Harold was allowed to return to England.

25. Here he grew more and more in the favour of the people: His brother Tostig, Edward's favourite, had been made Earl of Northumberland. Though the gentle Edward was so attached to him, Tostig was at heart a fierce and tyrannical man, and the people of Northumberland, who were a turbulent and warlike race, would not put up with him. They broke out in rebellion, and King Edward sent Harold to the north to settle matters, hoping that Tostig would be re-established in his dominion. But when Harold found that his brother had ruled cruelly and unjustly, and that the Northumbrians were resolved not to have him, and had even chosen another earl for themselves, he would not go to war for the sake of his brother; he allowed the Northumbrians to keep the earl whom they had chosen, and Tostig had to flee over the sea. Thus the people saw that Harold had their good at heart more than the greatness of his own family, and they honoured and trusted him more than ever.

1065.
Tostig.

26. Edward's end was now drawing near. He was growing old, and there was one great thing he longed to see completed before he died, one great work on which his heart was set—this was the building of Westminster Abbey. Though Westminster is now part of London, and we cannot tell when we pass from one into the other, in Edward's day it was some little distance off, and, more than that, it was an island. There were then beside the river Thames a great number of streams and little rivers running down from the hills round London, which are all buried alive now under the streets. There had long been a little old church standing upon this island, which, being covered with thickets and thorns, was called "Thorney Isle."

Westminster
Abbey.

27. Here Edward, who had been used to see much grander buildings in Normandy than the English knew how to make, determined that he would build the finest church that had ever been seen in England, and he also built himself a palace there, where he might watch the work going on. The place where it stood is still called "Old Palace Yard." This new grand

church, which was dedicated to St. Peter, was called the West Minster; the principal church in London itself was dedicated to St. Paul.

There is very little of Edward's grand abbey left now, but a few strong foundations of the pillars, and perhaps a dark archway or two, are still there. And our beautiful Westminster Abbey, which has been called "the most lovely and loveable thing in Christendom," is on the same spot, and there may still be seen the "shrine" or sacred tomb of Edward the Confessor, the first of all the good or great or famous Englishmen who lie buried there. To see the minster finished and consecrated was his heart's desire.

28. There was still one more thing to do, to appoint his successor. He had no children; all the old royal family were dead and gone except one man, that son of Edmund Ironside who had been sent long ago to Hungary, and his children. Edward, perhaps, meant to make him king after his own death, for he sent for him from Hungary, and had him and his three children brought to England, just as he himself had been sent for by Harthacnut. Prince Edward arrived with his son, Edgar the Etheling, and his two daughters, but he died almost directly after reaching England. His son Edgar was a very weak, almost imbecile young man. Had he been like his grandfather, Edmund Ironside, most likely all the rest of our history would have been different. But every one could see that this poor, feeble, harmless young fellow was not fit to be king in troublous times, and that the struggle for the throne would be between William and

1065.
Death of
Edward.

Harold, two strong and vigorous men. William always maintained that his cousin had promised the kingdom to him, but it is certain that as King Edward lay dying he said Harold was to be his heir.

29. He was now at Westminster; it was Christmas time; the beautiful church was finished, and ready to be consecrated. He longed to have strength for that great and joyful day. It was fixed for December 28th, the Feast of the Innocents. But he was too ill and weak to be present, the queen had to take his place at the ceremony, and he only went into the church when he was carried there to be buried.

30. They tell us that when he was dying he said he "hoped he was passing from the land of the dead to the land of the living;" and the 'Chronicle' says, "St. Peter, his friend, opened to him the gate of Paradise, and St. John, his own dear one, led him before the Divine Majesty."

LECTURE XV.—THE CONQUEST.

Election of Harold. Battle of Stamford Bridge. Battle of Hastings.
 Coronation of William the Conqueror. His character. Effects of the
 Norman Conquest—on the English character—on the English language.

1. It was evident that there would be a great contest for the crown at the death of Edward the Confessor. But, at least, in the minds of the English there was no doubt at all.

Harold was elected on the very day Edward died. 1065.
 The next day, January 6, Edward was buried and King
 Harold crowned in the new abbey at Westminster. Harold.

No one thought of choosing the Etheling, Edgar, who was the only man left of the old royal family, but who was young and weak, and plainly unfit to govern.

2. Some historians call Harold a "usurper," because he was not of the royal house; but I think, being an Englishman, and chosen by the English people, he was as true a king as ever we had.

He had already been king, in all but the name, through the last years of Edward the Confessor, and all the people knew him to be wise, just, brave, and merciful. He had, however, but little time to show how good a king he could be, and his short reign was full of troubles.

3. It was not likely that William of Normandy, the proud, ambitious, and strong-willed man, was going to give up the great wish of his life without a struggle. It is said that when he first heard the news of Harold being made Duke
 king he was "speechless with rage." However, he William.
 did not choose to show his fury at once; indeed, it would have suited him far better to come in peaceably than to have to fight for the kingdom. He accordingly began by sending messages to Harold, reminding him of the oath he had sworn, and summoning him to give up the kingdom to him who was Edward's heir. Harold must have bitterly lamented the one false step he had taken in swearing that oath which he never meant to keep.

4. But it could not be undone now. He sent back a straight-

forward message to the duke, that that oath had been extorted from him by fear of violence, and therefore it was not binding; and he also said very truly that he had had no right to make any oath or promise at all about the kingdom, which it had never been in his power to give away without the consent of the people and of the wise men, and that a rash oath ought to be broken. And he ended his answer by adding proudly that all the English people had heartily joined in giving the kingdom to him, and that he would not show himself so unworthy of their favour as to resign it, or to cease protecting them from foreign enemies; and, in short, that he would not give up the kingdom unless he gave with it his life. This was surely the answer of a true king, even though not of the royal blood.

5. But it was certain William would not be satisfied with that. He began forthwith to make preparations for seizing the crown of England by force, since he could not get it without. He made all the friends he could among the other princes and great potentates of the Continent, so as to get aid from their soldiers. But the principal ally he tried to secure was the Pope.

6. We may well wonder what concern the Bishop of Rome could have in this affair, so far away from Italy, and not a religious matter at all. But by this time the bishops of Rome were very different indeed from what might have been expected from followers of St. Peter or of Christ. We all know Christ's charge to Peter, "Feed My sheep. Feed My lambs." St. Peter's successors did not always think much about the sheep or the lambs now. They wanted to be great lords and princes, higher than all the kings and emperors in the world.

Even this, however, had its good side. In those wild times, when the princes of Europe were so proud, ambitious, and quarrelsome, when their only creed, as far as worldly affairs were concerned, seemed to be

"That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can,"

when they were always defying and robbing one another, it was a real benefit that there should be a bond of unity which kept the different states from falling all to pieces, a visible and, as they believed, divinely-appointed power, which in some sort they felt to be above them all, and to which they all owed some kind of obedience and duty.

It may be owned, too, that in many cases the Popes did use their great influence in a wise and Christian way, by striving to

teach their turbulent flock something of justice, peace, and pity ; but when, as was often the case, the Pope was as proud, ambitious, and crafty as the princes, and so the very light was darkened, how great was the darkness !

7. Hitherto, as far as England was concerned, the Popes had not interfered much in anything beyond giving the pall to the archbishops, and getting all the money they could from them, and from the country in general. But now that they were determined to have a voice, and the loudest voice, in the governing of every kingdom, the Pope would be glad to get an opening like this for taking part in the affairs of England, and having something to say about who was to be king.

8. Of course Harold and the English never thought of asking the Pope's opinion, still less his permission ; they settled things in the old free English way. Therefore there was no doubt the Pope would favour the Frenchman. He pronounced Harold accused and excommunicated, and he sent William a consecrated banner and a hair of St. Peter. It was not till afterwards that he made known what he expected in return.

9. Meanwhile William went on with his preparations, collecting a great army, increasing the pay of his soldiers, and making grand promises to all. But all his fine army, all his ships, all his strong will, even the Pope's flag and St. Peter's hair, would hardly have prevailed against Harold and his Englishmen had it not been for an English traitor who turned against his country and joined with her enemies. This was no other than Tostig, Harold's own brother, the same who had been driven out of Northumberland for his injustice and cruelty, and whom Harold had refused to support.

Tostig.

10. Tostig had taken refuge in Norway, and made friends with the king of that country, and the two now joined in invading the northern part of England, where they defeated the troops who opposed them and laid siege to York. Harold therefore, instead of watching the coast to prevent the Normans from landing, was obliged to march to the north to drive these invaders away. He tried at first to make peace with his brother, promising him forgiveness and rewards if he would submit.

11. But when Tostig asked what he would give to his friend, the King of Norway, Harold's messenger replied with scorn, "Seven feet of English ground for a grave ; or, perhaps, as he is a tall man, a little more." After this defiance there was no more thought of peace. A great battle was fought, and Harold conquered.

Battle of
Stamford
Bridge.

Not only the tall Norwegian king, but Tostig also, and many another chieftain, were left dead on the field, and received those "seven feet of English ground."

12. While Harold and his men were still rejoicing at their triumph, there came news that the terrible Normans had landed in the south and were ravaging the country. Harold had to hurry back, and to collect in all haste another army for another fight. But even now not all the English came. Two of the great earls, Edwin and Morcar, stayed away, jealous of Harold, as their father, who had been Earl of Mercia, had been jealous of Harold's father, Godwine. They seem to have thought, and even hoped, that England might now fall in pieces again, and be divided into separate kingdoms, as it had been in old times, and that, perhaps, if William conquered Wessex and the south they might be kings of Mercia and Northumberland. This was, no doubt, another reason why the English were overcome.

13. A long, long, stubborn, and obstinate battle took place. All day long, from sunrise till moonrise, the English stood firm, clustering round their brave king, who fought on foot with his two faithful brothers by his side. But it was all in vain. The English and the English battle-axes were strong, but the Normans with their fine horses and skilful bowmen were stronger. Harold was blinded by an arrow, but his men stood firmly by him still. At last he fell dead; his brothers had fallen already; and the English broke and fled.

**Battle of
Hastings,
or
Senlac.**

1066.

Duke William became "William the Conqueror."

14. This terrible fight was fought near Hastings, and is generally known as the Battle of Hastings, though it really took place on a hill then named Senlac, but which has ever since that day been called "Battle." And a fine abbey was built there by William in remembrance of his victory, the high altar of which was on the very spot where Harold had stood so boldly all day long, and had died so boldly in the evening.

15. After this battle William had not much more trouble for some time. Not that the whole country gave in and submitted at once; but though the English in many parts went on resisting and revolting for a long time, they never all joined together again into one great force, and they were conquered little by little, one after another. There was no longer any great leader who could have united them all. Harold was dead, and his two brave brothers; no one was left but Edgar the Etheling. The London people and the two earls who had deserted Harold tried to make Edgar king.

**Edgar the
Etheling.**

But what was the use of calling him king when he had nothing king-like in him?

16. William marched along the coast to Dover. The Dover men submitted; then he marched up the Thames and came to London with his army. At last London, with the poor sham King Edgar, submitted too without striking a blow. Edgar himself, with the archbishop and many bishops and nobles, came out to meet the Duke of Normandy, and offered him the crown. The 'Chronicle' says that "they swore oaths to him, and he promised them that he would be a kind lord to them."

17. So William entered London, and on Christmas Day, not yet a year since Edward's church was consecrated, the Frenchman was crowned in it King of England. The coronation ceremony was not a joyful one, as we may suppose. The coronation. But still William wished it to seem as if he were freely chosen. The great church was full, partly of English, and partly of French people. On one side of William stood an English archbishop, on the other side a French bishop. The Englishman spoke in English, and asked the people if they would have William crowned King of England. The Frenchman spoke in French, and asked the same question. All the people answered "yes," clapping their hands and shouting. At this great noise the French soldiers, who were keeping guard outside, fancied there was an uproar or a rebellion, and began to set fire to the houses (wooden ones, most likely) round about. The people ran out of the church, and there was a great tumult. And William, though a strong fierce man, trembled from head to foot (perhaps for the only time in his life). Then the Archbishop of York crowned him, "and he pledged him on Christ's book, before he would set the crown on his head, that he would govern this nation as well as any king before him had best done if they would be faithful to him."

The history of the next twenty years shows how he kept his word.

18. Thus William had his will. He was crowned King of England, and his descendants have sate on the throne of England ever since.

19. Before proceeding to the events of his reign, let us pause to consider some of the great results of the Norman Conquest. First of all, we must observe England never got rid of the Normans. As was mentioned before, she never really got rid of the Danes. But that did not in the end make much difference to the English people. The Danes, except for being a century or two behind in

Results
of the
Conquest.

civilization, were almost exactly like the English. Their language was nearly the same, and, as will be remembered, the account of their early inroads was very much like the account of the first coming in of the Angles and Saxons themselves. They had much the same habits, laws, and religion as our forefathers had when they first came to England. They learnt the Christian religion, and they settled down into being Englishmen without any difficulty. They brought in nothing new, and the English learnt nothing from them.

20. But now the case was very different. These Frenchmen, Northmen though they were by blood, were hardly at all like their old ancestors, or like the English. Their language was quite different, their habits, manners, and character were quite different. And the two nations hated each other. The French despised the conquered English, the English detested the proud and cruel French.

21. Yet after a time, wonderful to say, the French too became English, as the Danes had done before. They left off talking French, and talked English. They left off despising the English, and grew proud of being Englishmen. **Union of the races.** England was the dear home of both. But this union was not an easy one, as it had been with the Danes. Many long years of trouble and misery had to pass before it was complete.

22. When it was complete, when we no longer hear of Anglo-Saxons or Normans, for all were English, there was a great change. The English people was not quite the same that it had been before, and the English language was not quite the same that it had been before. Both changes were for the better; the union of Normans and English had produced a finer people than the English would have been alone, and the union of their languages a nobler and more perfect language.

23. In some very important respects the English were already a finer people than the Normans, although they were conquered. They understood far more about liberty and law, justice and self-control. They were much less arrogant and cruel, and in many ways were as clever, or more clever. But the Normans were more quick, more enterprising, and better soldiers. They thought more of refinement, grace, and polish than the English did. They had also seen a great deal more of the rest of the world, and knew more of human nature. Islanders, we know, are apt to be narrow and limited in their ideas, because they have not seen many different sorts of people and habits. And

through the union with the Normans, England was brought to take a great deal more interest and a much larger share in the affairs of the rest of Europe than she would most likely ever have done otherwise.

24. The English at that time appear to have lost all spirit of enterprise; they had settled down into a quiet kind of farmer's life, and did not care for much beyond holding their own and keeping off their enemies. The Normans were very different from this; they were restless, and full of ambition and aspiration. They could not be contented to stay at home; wherever there were adventures, wherever there was fighting to be had, some of the Normans would be sure to be there. Some of them went to Spain, some to Greece, some to Sicily and to Italy. Wherever they went they made themselves famous, and in some places they founded great and splendid kingdoms.

25. Now in the present day the people who wander and spread themselves over the whole world in the most wonderful way are the English; so that a traveller can hardly go to any, the most remote, little place in Africa or America without finding an Englishman there; to say nothing of our great empire in India, and our vast colonies in Canada, Africa, New Zealand, Australia, and other places. We probably owe a great deal of this to the Norman fire and energy, which at that time joined itself to the Teuton perseverance and plodding industry. It was like putting the swift spirit of an eagle into the strong body of an ox. We do not now go about marauding and seizing on other men's lands and kingdoms; and when we have subject nations to govern, we strive to govern them for their own good and greater happiness, though not so entirely as we ought, and as it is to be hoped we shall do in the future.

26. Now about our language. For a long time the two languages were quite distinct, but when both races began to speak the same, English was wonderfully improved from what it had been before. It was still English, and not French, as the nation was still English, and not French. But as the nation had acquired many good qualities, many arts, and talents, and refinements, and had left off some of its old clumsiness, through the union with the French, so had the language gained many new and beautiful words, and left off some of its unnecessary and lumbering forms.

27. A very learned German (Grimm) has said about the English language as it is now that "it possesses a power of expression such as perhaps never stood at the command of any

**The two
languages.**

other language of men." And he thinks its perfection is the result "of a surprisingly intimate union of the two noblest languages in modern Europe, the Teutonic and the Romance."

28. You are aware that our forefathers were Teutons, the same family as the Germans, that our language is much like the German still, and that many of our commonest words are the very same or only a little differently pronounced. Almost all our little useful words, our pronouns, adverbs, and prepositions, come to us also from the old German tongue. But we have besides all these a great many delightful and expressive words which the Germans have not, words which come originally from the Latin, and which the French gave to us. (Not that all our Latin words came to us through the French, for we took some ourselves at first hand, but the greater part the French brought with them.)

29. We will now take two very familiar English verses, and notice which words in them belonged to our old Teutonic forefathers, and which we learned from the Romance or French language of the Normans.

"All *people* that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with *cheerful voice* ;
Him *serve* with fear, His praise forth tell ;
Come ye before Him and *rejoice*."

"God *save* our *gracious* Queen,
Long live our *noble* Queen,
God *save* the Queen.
Send her *victorious*,
Happy and *glorious*,
Long to *reign* over us,
God *save* the Queen."

The words in italics are the Romance or French words, and though there are very few of them compared with the old English or German ones, we must surely all feel that we could not spare what there are—such beautiful words as "*rejoice*," "*gracious*," "*glorious*," &c. Our language would have been a sort of heavy homespun without them.

30. Another result of this blending is that in a great many cases we have two words for the same idea: one homely for every-day use as it were, and another rather grand and ornate for special occasions. The every-day one is the old Anglo-Saxon, the ornate one we learnt from the Normans.

Happiness . . . Felicity
Truth . . . Veracity

Heavy	Ponderous
Almighty	Omnipotent
Earthly	Terrestrial
Heavenly	Celestial
Shining	Radiant

We feel in a moment which of those words was German and which French, and we feel how rich and varied it makes our language that they are now all English.

31. One other and very curious thing about this change must be mentioned. The Frenchmen coming in as conquerors and lords, nearly all the lordly words belong to the French, such as sovereign, sceptre, throne, royalty, homage, duke, count, palace, castle. Though the highest of all, king and queen, are true old English words. So are the words we love better than palace and castle—home and hearth.

History in words.

32. Even down to very common and every-day matters we can learn, from the words of our language, which were masters and which were servants; even from the names we give to our food. It is a singular thing that the live animals in England have one set of names; but their flesh when killed and prepared for eating has another. We talk of sheep and oxen in the fields, but we do not talk of eating sheep and oxen; they are mutton and beef when they come to table. It is the same with calf and veal, deer and venison, pig and pork. Now in the times of the Norman conquest, and long after, the subject English had very little to do with the animals, except when they were alive. They had to keep the sheep, and to feed the oxen and calves, but they very seldom got any to eat; so the live creatures kept their old English names. But the Frenchmen were the people to eat them; therefore, when they were going to be eaten they took French names. Beef, mutton, pork, veal, and venison are all French words. Bacon is an old English word, and that was almost the only sort of meat the poor people could get. Now that we are not two, but one nation, all this has passed away. Poor men often eat beef, and rich men often eat bacon; but this little instance shows how much history lies written in very common words, if we know how to read it there.

33. We have now passed over more than 1100 years since the first beginning of our written history. In those years we have seen a great many different people casting longing eyes on dear old England, coming and coming again, but very seldom willing to go away. The Norman Conquest was the last great change which has taken place in

The English Nation.

the nation. It was the last time a fresh people came and settled down in the country.

34. What we are now has grown gradually from what we became then ; and it will be well to take note of the various races who, at different times, have joined in making the English people.

1st. There were the people mentioned in the first lecture, of whom we have no written history, but of whom we know something by the things they left behind them : their tools, clothes, graves, skeletons, &c.—the bronze people. These were almost certainly short, small, dark men, and no doubt many of us are partly descended from them. We have not one word of their language left ; though some people in the north of Spain, on the shores of the Bay of Biscay, are still believed to speak it.

2nd. The Celts or ancient Britons, of whom we have written accounts, whose descendants still live in Wales, Ireland, and other places, speaking their own language. Most likely we have also some of their blood in us ; and we have a few, though a very few, of their words in our language (basket, cradle, clan, kilt are Celtic words) ; a good many names of places, as Kent, London, and Leeds ; and of rivers, as Avon, Ouse, and Derwent.

3rd. The Romans, who went away of their own accord, leaving roads and other remains, and having taught the Britons Christianity, but from whom we do not seem to have received much more, except a few words, such as "street," which comes from their name for a paved road (*strata via*) ; and the names, or half the names, of some cities, as Manchester, the last part of which is a Latin word.

4th. The Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, who are the real groundwork of the nation, and whom I have generally called the English, and their language the English language.

5th. The Danes, who were near relations to the English, and soon became one with them ; whose language was very much like English, though not quite the same ; and from whom also we received a few words (as ugly, weak, cat, dairy) ; and some names of places, as Derby, Grimsby.

6th. The Normans, whose contributions to our language and character have been just spoken of.

Since that time there have been a few settlements of foreigners here and there, sometimes Flemings, sometimes French, but they were not large enough to produce any important difference in the English people.

LECTURE XVI.—THE CONQUEROR.

The foreigners in England. The feudal system. The castles. Risings of the English. Devastation of Northumberland. The New Forest. Appointments in the Church. Resistance to Papal encroachment. Death of the Conqueror.

1. THIS new king of England was a very remarkable man ; had he not been so, indeed, he never would have been king of England at all. His character has been very carefully and graphically described by the writer of the 'Chronicle' 1066. at this period, who tells us that he had seen him, and had even lived in his court for a time. And William of Malmesbury, who has been quoted before, and whose father was one of the Frenchmen who came to England at or soon after the Conquest, gives us his opinion of him too ; but he frankly owns that, though he wishes to speak the truth, he shall make much of his good points, and pass lightly over his bad ones. No doubt it was rather dangerous to speak out plainly about the fierce and powerful kings, whose sons or grandsons might be still living.

2. As to his appearance, William says, "he was of just stature, extraordinary corpulence, and fierce countenance. He was majestic, whether sitting or standing." He was William the Conqueror. so strong, no one but himself could draw his bow.

The chronicler tells us, "He was a very wise man, and very powerful ; more dignified and strong than any who went before him were." He also says, "He was mild to the good men who loved God ;" but it really appears that he only meant by those "good men" monks and churchmen, for it is not easy to find a trace of his ever being mild to any one else. And in the very same breath he goes on to say, "He was over all measure severe to the men who gainsaid his will. He was a very rigid and cruel man, so that no man durst do anything against his will. . . . He had earls in his bonds who had acted against his will ; bishops he cast from their bishoprics, and abbots from their abbeys ; and thanes he kept in prison ; and at last he spared not his own brother."

3. William of Malmesbury, the flatterer, says, "His anxiety for money is the only thing for which he can be deservedly blamed." So we may conclude this must have been very bad indeed. "He sought all opportunities of scraping it together; he cared not how. He would say and do some things, indeed almost anything, unbecoming such great majesty." The 'Chronicle' tells us the same. "He had fallen into covetousness, and altogether loved greediness." Then presently he breaks out again about his determination to follow his own will (this was with reference to some of his laws, which will be mentioned afterwards). "His great men bewailed it, and the poor murmured thereat; but he was so obdurate that he recked not the hatred of them all; but they must wholly follow the king's will if they would have land, or property, or even his peace."

4. Here was a prospect for poor England, and a contrast to the gentle and pious Edward. A strong will is a very fine thing. Perseverance and pertinacity are very fine things, as we saw in King Alfred, but only when the will is guided by conscience and duty. To will a good thing, and to pursue it even to death, is to be noble; but to will a wrong or a selfish thing, and to pursue that to the death, is to be wicked and devilish.

Not, however, that all that the Conqueror willed was wicked. At the first beginning of his reign over England he promised fairly, and perhaps really intended to govern justly what he had obtained so unjustly. But he became more and more pitiless and hard-hearted as time went on.

5. Very soon after he had settled himself in England, and all things seemed quite quiet and peaceable, he went back to Normandy, taking with him the prince, or etheling, Edgar, many of the English nobles, and the Archbishop of Canterbury; and, moreover, taking, what we know he was very fond of, an immense quantity of gold and silver and other precious things. For, in spite of all the plundering of the Danes, of which we have been hearing so much for hundreds of years, England was a rich country then, as it is now.

6. When he got back to France, about Easter, he held a very grand festival, and the French lords and princes were astonished and struck with admiration at the splendid things he had brought from England, the gold and silver dishes, vases, and cups, the embroidered hangings, and above all, the beauty and long-flowing hair of the young English nobles. English boys, it seems, were still as fair as when Pope Gregory had said they were not Angles but angels.

7. But meanwhile things went on very badly in England. The two men he had left in charge, one of whom was his own half-brother Odo, a bishop, and who ought therefore to have been just and sympathizing, treated the English so harshly and cruelly that they began to rebel.

8. Though the Norman conquest proved in the end for the good of the English nation, yet at the time and for years after it was an awful calamity. It will not be possible to describe all the different risings of the English, and the way they were put down; but I will endeavour to give some idea of the state of the country on the whole.

The misery
of England.

9. First, then, it was overrun by foreigners. It had been very offensive to the English, even in the days of Edward the Confessor, to have so many Frenchmen brought in and favoured. But at that time they had come as friends of the king, and were more or less on their good

Foreign
masters.

behaviour. We may imagine how different it would be when they came in far greater numbers, and no longer as visitors, but as conquerors and masters. All over the country, by degrees, the English lords and gentlemen were turned out of their homes, and their houses and lands given to Frenchmen; while the English archbishops and bishops were also supplanted, until there was only one English bishop left.

10. Not only nobles, soldiers, and churchmen came to England, but the lower classes also, tradesmen and artisans, all thinking themselves a great deal better than the English. This is how Fuller describes the coming over of these people:—"Soon would the head of the best *Monsieur* ache without a hatter; hands be tanned without a glover; feet be foundered without a tanner, currier, shoemaker; whole body be starved and cold without weaver, fuller, tailor; hungry without baker, brewer, cook; harbourless without mason, smith, carpenter. . . . And such as are acquainted with the French finical humour (both ancient and modern) know they account our tailors, botchers; our shoemakers, cobblers; our cooks, slovens; compared to the exactness of their fancy and palate."

11. All this would have been intensely galling and irritating even had the foreigners been humane and reasonable; but the most terrible part of it was the character of the French nobles and soldiers who had now got the land in possession. No words can tell how proud, how cruel, how insolent these men were. In their own country, before they came to England at all, they were perpetually fighting amongst themselves, or

rebelling against their duke ; and, whichever it was, always tormenting and ill-treating the lower people. If ever, by chance, there was a good man among them who had some feeling of religion, and some pity for the poor, he was almost sure, unfortunately, to retire from the world and become a monk, instead of remaining at his post and trying to do good.

12. It was at this time that there was thoroughly established in England the "feudal system," which was referred to before,

The feudal system.

but which must now be explained more fully. In those days there was one thing very different from the present. There was no standing army such as we have. Now a soldier is quite distinct from other men. If a man chooses to be a soldier he cannot be a lawyer, or a doctor, a tradesman, or a ploughman. The army is a separate profession, with its own rules and duties. But in old times there was no such thing. The king kept a small number of guards in his pay ; but if there were a war everybody in the country, all the gentlemen, all the tradesmen, farmers, and labourers, might be called upon to turn soldiers and to fight. Very often even bishops and clergymen did the same, though this was forbidden by the laws of the Church.

13. The main idea of the feudal system was that every one, high or low, except the king of the whole country, had a lord over him, to whom he owed service, and who owed him protection ; and a great part of the service which the "men" or vassals owed to their lord was military service. The king was supposed to be the owner of all the land in the kingdom, and he granted out estates to the great nobles on condition that when he went to war they would come and fight for him. If it was a large estate, the nobleman would have to bring a great many fighting men with him ; if a small estate, a few men ; but he was only the possessor of his own land on those conditions. When he received the estate he had to kneel down before the king bareheaded, and without sword or spear to put his hands in his, and swear to become his man, and to serve him faithfully, even to death. This was called doing homage.

14. If a nobleman got a very great estate or property, he would become a sort of king himself, and would divide his land again among other under-lords, on the same conditions, that they would follow him to battle and fight for him. These under-lords would, perhaps, divide theirs again into small properties, and have their "men" in them. But everybody in the country who had any land kept possession of it only on condition of

coming to fight himself ; and if it was a large property, of bringing a fixed number of men to fight for his lord. On the lord's part, he promised to protect and defend his "man" or his vassal.

15. Some of the lords and dukes in France and other parts of the Continent, who had very large portions of land, became as powerful or even more powerful than the king himself. The King of France had often much difficulty in keeping any sort of authority over his great vassals. The Duke of Normandy was one of these. He held Normandy on condition of being the man or vassal of the King of France. The Duke of Brittany held Brittany on the same terms, and many other of the great lords of France also. All of these portioned out their lands to their followers, so that they had subjects and armies of their own, and could do pretty much as they liked in their own dominions.

16. Now this same system came into full force in England, or very nearly so, and though William took care not to let his subjects become so powerful as himself, but to keep the mastery over every one in his own hands, still the great vassals, each on his own land, and with his own followers, became much like little kings, doing nearly as they pleased, and almost always pleasing to quarrel and fight and oppress the English.

17. One of the first things they began to do was a thing very hateful to the English, namely, to build strong castles to live in. The English, from their earliest days, had always disliked stone walls, though in the many wars they had had, they had learned the necessity of having some fortresses and strong cities to shelter the fighting men. Alfred's children, Edward and Ethelfled, as we saw, had built many of these "burgs" in their wars with the Danes ; but for a nobleman or gentleman to build such a place for his own dwelling, and to fill it with armed men, was something altogether new and horrible.

18. The castles were built very strongly. The principal part was a great tower or "keep," in which the lord and his family lived. The lowest part of all, where, in our times, an English gentleman would have his wine-cellar, was sometimes a store-room, but often a prison. That will at once give us some idea of the state of things, when a nobleman or gentleman had as part of his own house a prison to shut up his enemies in. How he used his prisoners when he got them there, came to light more fully fifty or sixty years after this.

19. These towers were immensely strong; the walls were sometimes fifteen feet thick, and the ruins of many of them are still to be seen. But the grandest of all, which is not in ruins yet, is a part of the "Tower of London," and was built for William himself. Outside the Tower, which stood in a sort of large court, was a strong wall, very often with a smaller tower at each corner, where soldiers would stand to shoot any enemies who might come. The windows, of the lower stories especially, were mere little slits, lest they might give admittance to the enemies; but they were so contrived that the men inside could shoot their arrows through them.

20. In very large castles there would even be two courtyards, one outside the other; the soldiers and other people, as blacksmiths and carpenters, lodged in these courts. The great gateway was also very strong, and had a portcullis, which was something like an immense sliding-shutter, made of iron bars, and could be let down in a moment. One of these is still to be seen in the Tower of London. Outside was a broad and deep ditch full of water, which was called a moat. If any one wanted to go in or out he had to cross over a bridge; and, to make it still more secure, this was not a firm and strong bridge rooted in the ground, but a drawbridge, which could be lifted up and down by the people inside.

21. If a Norman baron were to rise from the dead now and see the houses English gentlemen live in, standing open and cheerful in pleasant gardens, and, perhaps, an old man or a little girl to open the entrance-gate at the lodge; no soldiers or armed men anywhere, only peaceable servants and gardeners, he would be amazed. He would think the owner would soon be robbed and murdered, and his family carried off to prison. So it would have been in his days; and though all these things sound romantic and delightful in tales and poems, it must have been terrible to live in the midst of them.

22. Though they looked so grand, the rooms even where the lord and lady lived were small and dark, and there were very few of them; so that a lady often had no drawing-room, but must sit in her bed-room. As for the servants, they seem to have had no bed-rooms at all; a quantity of straw was spread on the floor of the lower rooms, where they passed the night. After a time, however, the barons built large and handsome dining-halls, where they and their retainers might feast.

During the reign of William the Conqueror, which only lasted twenty-two years, castles like this, some larger, some smaller,

were rising up all over the country, and in each of them a French tyrant or master, who could rob and plunder just as he liked, taking the lands of the English, and their daughters too, and dividing them among their own men.

23. These proud barons more than once rebelled against William. Some of them even attempted to make friends with the English, and help them in a revolt; but it was all in vain. What William had been strong enough to win he was strong enough to keep, and the proudest of the barons had to humble himself before the king.

24. Almost the worst thing William did was the way he put down and punished a great rebellion in the north, in the old Northumberland. Edgar the Etheling had taken refuge in Scotland with his mother, the Hungarian lady, and his two sisters. The King of Scotland married his sister Margaret, who was a very good and worthy descendant of our old kings. He now helped his brother-in-law in an effort to gain the crown of England, which by birth was his right. The King of Denmark also joined him; for the Danes had almost ceased to be enemies, and were looked on as helpers and allies against the cruel French. A great rising was made in the northern counties. The Danes sailed up the Humber; Edgar and the Scotchmen advanced into England from the north, and till William himself came to the rescue the French got the worst of it. But when William arrived the alliance all fell to pieces. The Danes turned traitors and went away, and the English and Scotch were thoroughly beaten at York. Edgar fled away again to Scotland, and William stood master.

1069.
The
rebellion
in the north.

25. And then he took his revenge. When he had first heard the news of the rebellion he was out hunting. He fell into one of his great furies, and swore "by the splendour of God" he would utterly exterminate the Northumbrian people, and never lay down his lance until he had done so. Now he kept his wicked oath. All the ravaging and harrying we have heard of before, seem like child's play to this. He divided his army into separate companies, and they went all over the country—the beautiful, smiling country—destroying and burning the orchards and fields with their fruit and corn; burning down the towns and villages, killing the sheep, the cattle, and the people. Whatever they did not burn or kill they carried off for themselves. And this they did over the great stretch of country from the Humber to the Tyne.

Its punish-
ment.

26. Even the French people who write of this horrible massacre seem appalled by it. England had never known anything like it before. The dead bodies lay about on the roads and in the fields; there was no one to bury them. The poor wretched creatures who had not been killed must have almost envied the dead; they wandered about, with no houses to shelter them, and no food to eat. It is even said that, after eating the flesh of the dead horses which were lying about, they were reduced to eating human bodies. A frightful plague broke out among them next, brought on by misery and hunger; and it is said that more than 100,000 victims perished. When William of Malmesbury wrote, which was sixty years afterwards, he says that beautiful country was still lying waste and bare; and "if any ancient inhabitant remains he knows it no longer."

27. But even this was not his worst deed. For all this barbarity he had, perhaps, some shadow of an excuse, or at least what may have seemed an excuse in his own fierce heart, in the fact that these people, or some of them, were rebelling against him; and a shadow of reason may be found for it by supposing that he would not let the plundering Danes find anything to plunder if they should venture to come back. But he afterwards did something of the same kind in a perfectly quiet part of England, where he had had no provocation, and acted

**The New
Forest.**

merely and solely for his own pleasure. This was when he made the New Forest in Hampshire. The only pleasure or amusement this stern and ruthless man ever enjoyed was one which even Edward the Confessor had also been very fond of—hunting. It is strange that the gentle and saintlike Edward should have taken much pleasure in that rough and cruel sport, but it seems quite in character with William. His love for the chase is very quaintly described by the chronicler. "He planted a great preserve for deer, and he laid down laws therewith, that whoso should slay hart or hind should be blinded. He forbade the harts, and also the boars, to be killed." This was in order that there might be the more for him to kill himself; and it was some of these rigorous forest laws which caused the "great men to bewail, and the poor to murmur," as we saw. "As greatly did he love the tall deer as if he were their father. He also ordained, concerning the hares, that they should go free."

28. To make that "preserve," as the 'Chronicle' calls it, he seized on a large district in Hampshire, nearly ninety miles round, where there were many pleasant villages, with their

churches, farm-houses, cottages, and corn-fields. He utterly destroyed all these, and turned out the helpless people to go where they could, giving them nothing in return. This was the man who had promised to be a "kind lord" to the English! Those cruel laws about blinding and maiming any one who meddled with his wild deer, and his brutal turning out of the innocent people, and destruction of their homes, to form a hunting-ground for himself, made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the English, and it was believed that a special judgment of God would avenge it. And indeed two of the Conqueror's sons and one of his grandsons met their death in this New Forest.

29. Another thing William did which offended the English very much, though it seems a very natural and reasonable thing to do, was to send men round to survey every part of the country, and to bring an exact account of it. The people bitterly resented this, because they thought he would make it a foundation for laying on more taxes (as perhaps he did). The book in which this record was written was called *Domesday Book*. It is still in existence, and tells a great many interesting facts about the state of the country at that time. It tells how much ploughed land there was; how much meadow-land; how many people lived in each town and village, and so on. But it seemed a horrible grievance to the English, especially because it was done so very carefully. "So very narrowly he caused it to be traced out, that there was not one yard of land, nor even—it is a shame to tell, though it seemed to him no shame to do—an ox, nor a cow, nor a swine left that was not set down in his writ."

1085-6.
Domesday
Book.

30. "No one is all bad." Though William had shown so much cruelty, and had wronged so many English people, he did other things for which we must admire him, and which were worthy of the King of England. He showed that he had spirit and courage enough to confront the Pope, and resist his encroachments.

The king
and the
Pope.

The proudest of all priests at this time was Hildebrand, who afterwards became Pope Gregory VII.; and who was the moving spirit at Rome through this whole period. He had not given his flag and his blessing for nothing; and when once William was firmly settled on the throne of England he demanded in return that he should do homage to him for it, as if he were the real head and owner of the country, and William had received it from him.

31. However, the proud Pope found a match in the proud king. William positively refused to agree to his demand; and to show how much he was in earnest, he would not even let the English bishops go out of the country to attend the Pope's councils. He made all the bishops do homage to him just like the barons, and send soldiers from their lands to fight for him. He would not even let a letter from the Pope come into the country without his permission.

32. Always up to this time the king and the earls and the bishops had been the best of friends, and had all worked together harmoniously; there could hardly be said to be any distinction between Church and State. Hitherto, also, the Popes had made no outrageous claims to supremacy; but from henceforward we shall find a great many disputes, which at length grew to be very serious. For the present, however, William with his strong will kept all in his own hands.

33. Though, by degrees, he turned out the English bishops and other churchmen and put Frenchmen in their place, he certainly took pains to choose good men: Lanfranc, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, in particular, was a very learned and excellent man. He and others of the new bishops founded very good schools in many places; he also joined with the king and the only remaining English bishop in putting an end to the slave-trade at Bristol, which had gone on for so many years. But Lanfranc was made so miserable by the cruelty and oppression which he saw around him, that he longed to leave the country, and even wrote imploring the Pope to allow him to quit such scenes of wickedness and tyranny.

34. Though we cannot say "religion" was prospering much, yet the Church improved outwardly. The French were, as we know, far superior to the English in architecture, and as soon as they were settled in England they began to build splendid churches and abbeys in all directions. Many of our beautiful cathedrals were begun at this period, or very soon afterwards, and were a great glory to the country. Some of the finest were Durham, Peterborough, Rochester, and Gloucester. Pointed architecture had not yet been invented, and they still had round arches and massive pillars, which were richly decorated, and were very grand, stately, and solemn.

35. One more good thing about William the Conqueror is, that his private life was excellent; he was a most faithful husband, and a kind and indulgent father; indeed, it seems that this man, so fierce and unbending to all others, over-indulged and

spoil his children. His eldest son, Richard, was killed by a stag in the New Forest. In his latter years the next son, Robert, rebelled against him, as in those turbulent days, sons very often did against their fathers; and he was engaged in wars both with him and the King of France during the last part of his life.

36. But before we come to the end of William's reign we will see what became of the Etheling Edgar, who was the last man of the old English royal blood. He certainly did not have a glorious end, but at the same time it was not an unhappy one. Every one seems to have been very kind to him. After the disastrous failure in Northumberland he went back to the King and Queen of Scotland. They did all they could for him; they "gave him and all his men great gifts and many treasures, in skins decked with purple, and in pelisses of marten skin, and weasel skin, and ermine skin, and in golden and silver vessels;" but they advised him at last to make peace with William, which he did. The king received him well; no doubt glad to get him quietly on his side; and he also gave him large presents. William of Malmesbury says that, "remaining at court for many years, he silently sunk into contempt through his indolence, or, more mildly speaking, his simplicity." He made friends with the king's son Robert, and afterwards went with him to Jerusalem. But he finally returned to England, received a pension, and when William of Malmesbury wrote "he was growing old in the country in privacy and quiet;" a great contrast to his grandfather Edmund, and so many others of his race, who lived such short but glorious lives.

End of the
Etheling
Edgar.

37. The disputes of William with his son Robert and the King of France, do not exactly belong to the history of England, but it was during his war with the latter that his end came. He had conquered and set on fire the town of Mantes, and was riding through the burning city, when his horse, setting his foot on the red-hot ashes, stumbled, and threw him heavily against the saddle. He never recovered from the hurt. They carried him to Rouen, where he lay dying many weeks, during which time he made what best arrangements he could for the disposal of the great dominions and treasures which he had spent his life in gaining, but which he could not carry away with him. He bequeathed the Duchy of Normandy to his eldest son, Robert, and the kingdom of England to the second. The youngest son, Henry, only received a sum of money, and no land or dominion at all;

1087.
Death of
William.

but his father, who well knew the characters of his children, foretold that the day would come when Henry would have all.

38. He then tried, it seems, to make some reparation for the ill he had done, by ordering large sums of money to be given to churches and monasteries, and particularly that the church of Mantes, which had been burnt down, should be rebuilt. He also commanded many of his prisoners to be set free.

39. After all his glories and triumphs, the great conqueror could barely find an honourable grave or a true mourner. At the very moment when he was to be laid in a tomb in a fine church he had built at Caen, a certain knight stood forth, "loudly exclaiming against the robbery." The very land the church was built upon, had belonged to him and to his father before him, and William had taken it from him by force to found this new church. It was not till a sum of money had been paid down to appease this injured man that the funeral could be proceeded with. And only one of the sons he had loved, if even one, followed his father to the grave.

LECTURE XVII.—THE CONQUEROR'S SONS.

William Rufus. His brother Robert. The king and the barons. The English people. Anselm. The Crusades. Henry Beauclerc. His marriage. The English take his part. Peace, order, and justice. Stephen and Matilda. Misery of the country. The agreement and promised reform. Death of Stephen.

1. WILLIAM, the Conqueror's second son, who is generally called Rufus, from his red hair and complexion, lost no time in rushing to England to take possession of the kingdom and his father's treasure. This treasure was at Winchester, and the 'Chronicle' says, "It was not to be expressed by any man how much was there gathered in gold, and in silver, and in vessels, and in robes, and in gems, and in many other precious things."

1067.
William
Rufus.

2. He was speedily crowned by Lanfranc, as his father had desired. He seems to have been one of the worst kings England ever had; more hated and detested far than his father had been. William the Conqueror had something grand and kingly about him, which people looked upon with awe and reverence as well as fear. William Rufus was brutal, coarse, irreligious, and ignorant, in addition to being, like his father, cruel, tyrannical, and avaricious. William of Malmesbury says that in public "he had a supercilious and threatening look, and a severe and ferocious voice; in private he liked jesting and levity." He tells us too that he "blushes to relate the crimes of so great a king;" but he does relate quite enough to show us what his opinion really was. "He feared God but little; man not at all."

His
character.

3. He disgusted the people not only by his cruel taxes and oppression, but by pouring contempt on all they held most sacred. It appears to have been his custom "to come into church with menacing and insolent gestures," and to treat the bishops and clergy with shameful injustice. The wonderful value placed on "relics" in those times has been mentioned already. The bones of saints and other such things were placed

in boxes in the churches, which boxes were splendidly ornamented with gold, silver, and jewels, and called "shrines," and they were regarded with a reverence that we in our days can hardly understand. When William Rufus wanted money, which he nearly always did, for he was a spendthrift as well as covetous, he called the relics "dead men's bones," and made the abbots and bishops give up the gold and silver from their shrines, and even their crucifixes and sacramental cups.

The 'Chronicle' says, "All that was hateful to God and oppressive to men was customary in this land in his time, and therefore he was most hateful to almost all his people, and odious to God." Moreover, he was perpetually quarrelling with one or other of his brothers.

4. Just at first he did not begin so ill; indeed, as long as Archbishop Lanfranc lived he was kept in some kind of check, and the people were inclined to take his part. Almost as soon as the Conqueror was dead, the proud, fierce lords, whom even he could hardly tame and keep down, began to rebel again.

5. Robert, the eldest son, had been made Duke of Normandy, but he would have very much liked to be King of England too. For these Frenchmen found England a very pleasant place when they had once set foot in it. It is all very well, as Fuller remarks, to say that France is so much better than England, and when we have ale they have wine, and when we have oats they have wheat; in short, that France is a garden and England only a field. "But let such know," says patriotic Fuller (and I am sure we all agree with him), "that England in itself is an excellent country, too good for the unthankful people which live therein; and such foreigners who seemingly slight secretly love and like the plenty thereof."

6. Many of the great Norman lords took part with Robert; partly because he was of a much pleasanter disposition than William; kindly and generous, though idle and pleasure-loving (but that suited them all the better, as they did not like a master); partly also because they now had lands both in England and France, and if they did not like one master, far less would they like two. So they wished one man to be both King of England and Duke of Normandy, and that man to be Robert.

7. William for his part would have had no objection to be Duke of Normandy as well, but he had no notion of giving up England. Now these and other disputes between the king and the barons turned out in the end very well for the English,

because, as the barons were against him, the king had to throw himself upon the people, and to try and please them, and win their confidence. And in after times, when the kings grew strong, the barons had to do the same, and so the people rose in importance and were better treated.

8. We do not find, however, that it did them much good as yet, because William was so faithless. He made excellent promises to the people again and again, but he never kept them. Before Lanfranc would crown him king, **William's promises.** he had made him swear that he would preserve justice and mercy throughout his kingdom, that he would defend the Church and follow the archbishop's advice in all things. Now, again, being in this trouble about his brother Robert, he called the English together and begged them to help him. He promised if they would aid him in this need, he would give them a better law of their own choosing; he would have no more unjust taxes, and he would not be so harsh and cruel about his hunting-grounds.

So then the English agreed to stand by him and fight for him, and no doubt were all the more glad to do so from knowing and hating the French lords as they did.

9. But William never kept his word, and when Lanfranc died he went from bad to worse. After a few years he fell ill, and then, thinking he was going to die, he began to repent and made all sorts of good promises over again. But as soon as he got well he forgot them all and behaved worse than ever.

10. It was while he was ill that he did one good thing, for which it appears he was heartily sorry afterwards; that was, that he appointed a very good old man to be Archbishop of Canterbury in the place of Lanfranc, who had now been dead some years, and the king had never yet filled up his place, in order that he might keep all the great income which belonged to the post for himself. The new archbishop, whose name **Anselm.** was Anselm, was very unwilling indeed to be settled in England near such a king as he knew William to be. He said "the Church of England was a plough which ought to be drawn by two oxen of equal strength; would they then yoke him to it, an old feeble sheep, with a wild bull?"

11. The king and the archbishop very soon fell out, as was likely. We must still leave on one side the great dispute that went on through several reigns between the king and the Church, and for the present only observe that William's violence was such that Anselm left the country.

12. But before he went away he fell into a difficulty of another kind—about the dress and fashion of the times. Just as the clergy in the old days before the Conquest had taken a great deal of trouble in preaching against fine clothes and vanity, so did Anselm now. There were two special things he found to complain of. One was that the noblemen and fashionable gentlemen had begun to wear long curled hair. The French had perhaps for once condescended to learn this fashion from the English, for we saw how they had admired Edgar the Etheling and the other young Englishmen with their flowing locks when William the Conqueror took them over to France.

13. Anselm would not put up with this, nor with another fashion of wearing a most extraordinary kind of long shoes with sharp points, sometimes so long that the ends were tied up to the knees with silver chains. Innumerable sermons were preached against these shoes; the clergy even held assemblies to denounce them; but all in vain. Hume writes about this, "Such are the strange contradictions of human nature, though the clergy at that time could overthrow thrones, and had authority sufficient to send a million of men on their errand to the deserts of Asia, they could never prevail against those long-pointed shoes."

14. We will not linger over the wars with Robert in Normandy, but it will be well to explain what Hume meant by the million of men going to the deserts of Asia. We
The
Crusades. heard before about the love for going on pilgrimages; about Cnut's pilgrimage to Rome, and the troubles and dangers of the pilgrims. The still holier pilgrimage to Palestine and the tomb of Christ was even more dangerous. Yet people longed fervently to go there, not only from love to Christ's memory, but also because they believed that if they made that journey all their sins would be forgiven. They would lay by the very shirt they wore when they entered Jerusalem, that they might be buried in it, and they thought that would carry them straight to heaven.

15. Terrible dangers and difficulties beset the pilgrims at Jerusalem. The Holy Land by this time belonged to the Turks, who, besides being always a cruel people, had a great hatred for the Christian religion. They began to insult and ill-use the priests and pilgrims to the holy places. The patriarch, or principal clergyman, was interrupted in his prayers, dragged along the pavement by his hair, and thrown into a dungeon. The Christians were murdered and outraged, and treated like the worst of criminals.

16. The Pope, the clergy, the princes, the people of Europe began to be greatly moved. Above all, the preaching of one man stirred the hearts of all. This was a Frenchman called Peter, who had been a soldier, but, like some others of whom we have heard, had become religious, and thereupon left the world. He turned hermit (even more solitary and strict than a monk), and he went on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There he saw the state of things just described. He came back to Europe full of burning zeal, and resolved to stir up the nations of Christendom to put an end to the disgrace of leaving their sacred places in the hands of the infidel.

17. He went everywhere preaching. He was one of those men who have the gift of a fiery eloquence, which works on the heart of the multitude. Wherever he went people crowded to him, and listened with sobs and cries to his tale. Every one was glowing with desire to do something in honour of Christ, and to fight against His enemies. And so an immense army arose. Princes, nobles, knights, poor men, even women and children, French, Germans, Italians were seized with the same enthusiasm. The Pope blessed them, promised forgiveness of sins to all who would fight in such a holy war, and bade them wear a red cross, in sign of their religion. This was the beginning of the "Crusades" or wars of the cross, which from this time were carried on, at intervals, for 300 years.

18. Though we cannot of course go into the history of these wars, we shall often hear of them again, because a great many English, Scotch, and Welsh joined them, and at different times they had much to do with English history. 1100.

The account of the taking of Jerusalem is one of the strangest in all history; it is such a mixture of wickedness and piety; the same men seeming devils in the morning and saints in the evening.*

19. We may suppose that William Rufus, the scoffing and profane, did not feel moved to join the Crusades. But his elder brother, the Duke of Normandy, did. And as he wished to have a great many followers with him, and William gets altogether to make a fine show, he required a great deal of money—far more than he had got. Now possession of Normandy.

William saw his opportunity. He promised a large sum of money to Robert on condition of his selling or pawning Normandy to him for five years. But we may feel pretty sure he never meant to give it back if he once got it. Robert agreed to the bargain. Of course William wrung this money out of the

* This may be read in 'The Crusades,' G. W. Cox, pp. 70—72.

English, and his cruelty, added to other troubles, made their condition very pitiable. The Chronicler gives us very melancholy little records of this time.

"1096. This was a very dismal year all over England, both through manifold taxes, and also through a very sad famine.

"1097. This was, in all things, a very sad year, and over-grievous from the tempests . . . and unjust taxes, which never ceased.

"1098. This was a very sad year, through manifold unjust taxes, and through the great rains, which ceased not all the year."

20. But the fierce king's end was near. One summer day he went out hunting in the New Forest, the fatal forest which his father's cruelty had made, and where his eldest

1100.
His death. brother Richard had already met with his death.

According to the old histories, there had been many strange omens and prophecies about the king's death. He himself had had a dreadful dream, and so had other men; and although in his usual mocking way he tried to laugh it off, it was noticed that he drank more wine than usual before he set forth to the chase. The last time he was seen alive he was riding through the forest with only one man by his side, a French knight named Walter Tyrell.

21. Late that same evening the king's body was found alone in the forest with an arrow through the heart. No one ever knew who shot that arrow. Sir Walter Tyrell had fled away, and it was thought by many that he shot the king by accident. But he always swore that it was not so, and that he only fled through fear of being suspected. All we know for certain is, that in that forest, which the poor persecuted people believed to be haunted by avenging demons, the wicked son of the Conqueror met with a violent death. His dead body was carried in a rough cart to Winchester, and buried in the cathedral there, without any prayers or sacred service.

22. Here was another chance for Robert, had he been at hand; but he had not yet returned from the Crusade. And as William happened to be on good terms with his younger brother Henry just then, he was in England at the time, and had formed one of the hunting-party. By not losing a moment of time, he seized on the royal treasures, which were still kept at Winchester, and got himself chosen king.

23. Henry was a far better man than William; he was in some things more like his father, but better also than he. The

'Chronicle' says, "A good man he was, and there was great awe of him. No man durst misdo against **Henry I.** another in his time. He made peace for man and beast." We are so used to peace and order now that we can hardly realize all those words meant then. It is true that he had a great many wars in France, but England itself was at peace; so much so that "foreigners willingly resorted thither, as to the only haven of secure tranquillity." Above all things, he was inflexibly just, and though he was stern and unrelenting to his enemies, he put down tyrants and protected the poor.

24. The English also felt more inclined towards Henry because, in one sense, he might be called an Englishman. He had, at least, been born in England, after his father became king, and he was brought up in England in the abbey or monastery of Abingdon. He was clever and well-educated—wonderfully so for those days. He was surnamed Beau-clerc, which is French for "fine scholar," a title which he is said to have earned by translating 'Æsop's Fables' from Latin into French. No doubt this good education made him much more thoughtful, prudent, and reasonable than William Rufus. Besides his liking for books, he had some other tastes with which we can sympathize. William of Malmesbury says, "He was extremely fond of the wonders of distant countries; begging with great delight, as I have observed, from foreign kings, lions, leopards, lynxes, or camels—animals which England does not produce," he gravely adds. He had also a porcupine. "He had a park called Woodstock, in which he used to foster his favourites of this kind." So that he really was the first to keep a sort of Zoological Gardens in England.

25. Henry began his reign, as his brother had done, by making good promises; and he kept them much better. His promises were published in what is called a "charter."

A charter, to begin with, only meant a sheet of **His** paper, or anything which could be written upon; **charter.** but it has come to mean a formal paper on which are written the rights and liberties of a people, or of a town, or of any body of men. If these things are only floating in men's minds they are apt to get confused or forgotten. A strong man may deny them, and a weak man would be unable to prove them; an ignorant man may not even know of them; but if they are once written down they are a protection to the poor and a curb to the rich. We shall hear of what value this very charter was in a great fight for freedom more than a century afterwards. He promised

liberty to the Church, to the barons, and to all the people ; and he made the barons promise to do as much for their under-men or vassals as he did for them.

26. His next good act was to call back the Archbishop Anselm, and to promise to be guided by his advice. Though he made this promise, and though he and the archbishop lived on the whole harmoniously, yet the disputes about Church matters did not cease. But, at least, Henry consented to have his long curls cut off ! Next, to show as clearly as possible the line he intended

His marriage.

to take, which was to conciliate the English people, and be their true king rather than tyrant, he made a marriage which pleased them heartily. He chose for his wife the princess of Scotland, niece to the Etheling Edgar, and great granddaughter of Edmund Ironside, "of the true royal line of England," writes the pleased chronicler.

27. This great compliment to the old royal family was very dear to the nation, though the French lords were scornful and disdainful. They pretended to compare Henry and the queen to an English farmer and his wife, and called them "Farmer Goderich and his cummer Godgifu," which are two old Anglo-Saxon names. We may be sure Henry was too sensible to take much notice of that nonsense, though William of Malmesbury says "he heard these taunts with a terrific grin ;" but he kept silence. He had pleased the people whom he wished to please, and he got a very good wife for himself. Her real name was Edith, but she had to take a French name now, and was called Matilda, as Henry's mother had been. This Matilda, the Conqueror's wife, was also descended in a side-way from Alfred ; and through these two princesses all our kings and queens, down to Queen Victoria, could trace their pedigree to Egbert and Cerdic, and to the god Woden, if they liked.

28. Matilda, like Henry, had been well educated for those times, and had been brought up in England, in a nunnery. When she became queen she encouraged scholars to come to her court, and was very generous to them. Above everything she liked beautiful music and singing, and was even "thoughtlessly prodigal," says William, towards people with melodious voices. She did not travel about with her husband, but had a palace at Westminster, where these scholars and musicians visited her. "This the king's liberality commanded ; this her own kindness and affability attracted. She was singularly holy ; by no means despicable in point of beauty." This rather faint praise makes us fancy she cannot have been remarkably handsome ; but she

was very good to the sick and poor, and very devout in going to church.

29. Soon after Henry had thus established himself on the throne, and won the favour of the English, his brother Robert came home from the Crusades, and, of course, again wanted to get the kingdom of England. But there was no chance for him. Henry was wise, prudent, and determined; in all respects a strong, clever man. Robert was good-natured, weak, and idle. "He forgot offences and forgave faults," writes William of Malmesbury, "beyond what he ought to have done; he answered all who applied to him exactly as they wished, and, that he might not dismiss them in sadness, promised to give what was out of his power." If people went before him to complain of ill-usage and injustice, though he would feel for them at the moment, and be angry, he soon forgot all about it, and did nothing. Thus "he so excited the contempt of the Normans that they considered him as of no consequence whatever." So that, far from his getting England, he lost Normandy. It fell out as William the Conqueror had foretold on his death-bed—Henry obtained all.

30. It is impossible to defend the way Henry treated his brother; and no one can help feeling sorry for Robert; but he was in no way fit to be a ruler of men. He was at last put in prison and kept there till the day of his death. There are two quite different accounts of the way he was treated: one, that he was very cruelly used, had his eyes put out, and at last died of a broken heart; the other, that he received great kindness and attention, and was "provided with abundance of amusement and food." We may hope the last is the truth, but we do not know. He left a son, William, who made many efforts to get back his father's duchy; but to no purpose, and he died young, leaving Henry the undisputed lord both of England and Normandy.

Death of
Robert.

During these conflicts Henry took pains to teach the English how to fight against the Normans, who sided with Robert; and especially against the cavalry, to which they had been so unaccustomed. He went amongst the ranks himself, training and encouraging them, so that by and bye the English lost all fear of the French.

31. Though all the wars took place in France, England was heavily taxed to pay for them; and there was a great deal of distress, owing to stormy seasons and bad harvests. Another grievance of which the people had to complain was the plundering of the king's followers when he travelled about. These people were

under no sort of control; they would enter the houses of the farmers and peasants, without any permission, to eat and drink whatever they could find, never offering to pay for it, and insulting the owners and their wives and daughters in every shameful way. Out of mere insolence and cruelty, whatever they could not eat they would carry off and sell, or even burn, and what remained of the liquor which they could not drink they would wash their horses' legs with. Henry, at any rate, after a time, put a stop to this, and punished some of the offenders very severely; but it appears the country people were still compelled to furnish certain things for the court without being paid for them.

32. Still, on the whole, the English people were decidedly better off now than they had been under the two former kings.

They began to be of more importance, and to feel Improvement that they were so. Besides their having learnt to in the condi- fight and to stand their ground against the French, tion of the there was another thing which helped them. This English.

was, that the towns began to be larger, and richer, and of more consequence. Almost all the people in the towns were English, and by degrees they got a great many privileges, London especially; they were free from many of the taxes and the oppressions of the country, and they were allowed in many ways to govern themselves, as they do now. So that though there were still many troubles, things were improving, and if Henry had left behind him a son as strong and sensible as himself, England would have begun to hold up her head again.

33. But a bitter misfortune befell the king. His wife Matilda, who died in 1118, had left him but one son and one daughter.

The young prince, her son, was gay and wild, but he had in him the germs of something brave and generous. He was but nineteen, and might, it was to be hoped, grow into a wise man under his father's training and example.

But in crossing over from France into England his vessel was wrecked. He with his young and jovial companions, and his half-sister, in trying to save whom he gave up his own life, all perished together. Only one poor man of all the gallant ship-load reached the land in safety. The king's happy days were all over now; they say he never smiled again. Though he afterwards married another lady, he had no second son.

34. He now tried to make his daughter Matilda or Maude his heir. This would have been very difficult in any case, as it was

an unheard-of thing, either in England or France, for a woman to reign ; and what in the end made it really impossible was, that Maude was a very proud, arrogant, and unpopular woman, not at all like her mother. She had been married to the Emperor of Germany, but was now a widow. Her father next made her marry a French prince, the Count of Anjou. He then caused all the barons to swear that she should be queen, and they would be faithful to her after her father's death. The first who swore the oath was her cousin Stephen, son of Henry's sister Adela.

**The Empress
Maude.**

35. Soon after these things were fairly settled, as he hoped, Henry died in France, but was brought to England to be buried. That year there had been an eclipse of the sun.

"Men were greatly wonder-stricken and affrighted, and said that a great thing should come thereafter.

**1135.
Death of
Henry.**

So it did, for that same year the king died."

No sooner was he dead than his strong hand was missed. "*Every man that could,*" says the 'Chronicle,' "*forthwith robbed another.*" And if people had thought him stern, and complained of the taxes in his time, they very soon wished him back again. For now came a time of such dreadful misery and trouble as had never yet been known.

36. First of all, instead of peace, came war. Though all the lords had sworn that they would support Matilda, many of them at once deserted her. Her cousin Stephen, in spite of his oaths, came forward as a candidate for the throne. He was a great contrast to Matilda. She was haughty and overbearing ; he was gay and pleasant. He was ready to joke and feast with anybody, even quite low people, and to make kind promises to any one, though he very seldom fulfilled them. In fact, he must have been rather like his uncle Robert. But a great many people in England took his part, among others, the men of London, who were grown so important now as to be looked upon almost as nobles.

Stephen.

37. Matilda, on her side, had her uncle the King of Scotland, her half-brother the Earl of Gloucester (an illegitimate son of Henry), and a great many nobles. The Scotch army was soon beaten, but the Earl of Gloucester was not so easily put down. He seems to have been a very courageous and clever man, and most faithful to his sister's cause. But as Stephen was first in the field, he was crowned king, and Matilda could never get herself crowned queen. So this is called the reign of Stephen, though it was hardly a reign really, but a constant war.

Civil war.

38. Like the other kings, he made good promises of justice, mercy, and favour to the Church, and, in particular, he promised to the people the laws of Edward the Confessor. Though Edward the Confessor had not made any special laws, his reign was always looked back to by the English people as the last one when they had been peaceably governed by their own old national law, and they always wished their new kings to be like Edward, whose weak points were now quite forgotten. But Stephen never kept these promises; perhaps he could not. The misery of the people reached its height while he was called king.

39. Even had there not been the civil war, there was now no one who could keep the barons in order. Innumerable new castles were built, each a den of tyrants and robbers.

Miseries. The account of this period, given in the 'Chronicle,' is one of the most terrible pages in English history, and we must read it as it stands there if we wish to realize it. All other words would seem poor and cold in comparison. The iron had entered into the soul of the man who wrote this. "They filled the land full of castles. They greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work at these castles; and when the castles were finished they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those whom they suspected to have any goods, by night and by day, seizing both men and women, and they put them in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with pains unspeakable, for never were any martyrs tormented as these were." Then he gives a most piercing description of the horrible tortures that were invented to force these innocent prisoners to give up their goods. After that he adds, "Many thousands they exhausted with hunger. I cannot and I may not tell of all the wounds and all the tortures that they inflicted upon the wretched men of this land; and this state of things lasted the nineteen years that Stephen was king, and ever grew worse and worse. . . . Then was corn dear, and flesh, and cheese, and butter, for there was none in the land; wretched men starved with hunger; some lived on alms who had erewhile been rich; some fled the country; never was there more misery, and never acted heathens worse than these. At length they spared neither church nor churchyard, but they took all that was valuable therein, and then burned the church and all together. . . . The bishops and clergy were ever cursing them, but this to them was nothing, for they were all accursed and foresworn and reprobate. The earth bare no corn,—you might as well have tilled the sea,—for the land was all ruined by such deeds; and it was said openly that Christ and His saints slept."

40. We must pass over the history of the battles and sieges. It is not of much interest which of the two parties got the better for the time. Once both Stephen and the Earl of Gloucester were in prison. Once Matilda herself was nearly made prisoner, and had to escape on foot through the snow, clad in white that she might not be seen. And so it went on through those wretched years, till at last every one was worn out, and through the exertions of the bishops and the Pope's legate a peace was made. **The peace.**

41. Stephen was to remain king for his life. Matilda was never to be made queen; but she received, what, probably, she valued more, the promise that her son should be king in his turn; for with all her faults she seems to have been a good mother. Stephen had lost his only son, and Matilda's son, who had been an infant when his grandfather died, was now a grown young man, and one of whom we have much to hear. For the present Stephen adopted him as his son and heir, and the land was at peace.

42. Great plans were now made for reform: the soldiers were to be sent home; the knights were to turn their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; the desolate country was to be cultivated again; oxen, cows, and sheep were to be given to the poor farmers; thieves and robbers were to be hanged, and many other good resolutions were made. But Stephen did not live long enough to carry them out, even if he wished to do so. He died the next year. **1154.**

LECTURE XVIII.—HENRY PLANTAGENET.

Character of Henry. His marriage. His dominions. Distinction between English and Normans disappears. Destruction of the castles. Condition of Ireland. The Conquest.

1. We are at last about to lose the company of our faithful friend, the Anglo-Saxon 'Chronicle,' which has been our guide and teacher through so many centuries, but which now comes to an end suddenly. No one wrote any more English books of any sort, except a few sermons and such like, for fifty years, though there are very good ones in Latin.

We shall not easily forget the terrible description of the times of Stephen and Matilda, written by the last of the "chroniclers;" but it is a consolation to think that before he finally laid down his pen the dawn of better days had appeared. Some of the latest words in the 'Chronicle' are about Henry, the son of Matilda, who was to be the king after Stephen. "All folk loved him, for he did good justice and made peace." Thus England began to lift up her head in hope.

2. Henry II. had a long reign of thirty-five years, and many most important and interesting things happened in those years.

1154.
Henry's
character.

The man himself is also very interesting. He was clever, like his grandfather, Henry I., and well brought up. His education had been looked after by his brave uncle, Robert, Earl of Gloucester, who was as good a scholar as he was a soldier, if we may believe what his learned friends, of whom William of Malmesbury was one, say of him. There is a curious letter written about Henry by a man who knew him very well, and who had been tutor to another king, the King of Sicily. He says this latter had learned a good deal, but as soon as his tutor went away "he threw away his books, and gave himself up to the usual idleness of palaces." Henry II. was very different from this. He never left off the habit of private reading, and he surrounded himself with learned men, and delighted in conversing with them on difficult and

interesting subjects, so that he might have been called Beau-clerc also. He was, moreover, wonderfully active and industrious in other ways. He would travel about so fast that the King of France, who was rather lazy, said of him, "He neither rides on land nor sails on water, but flies through the air like a bird." He went through the country, as our good old kings used to do examining into every one's conduct, and especially as to how the judges did their duty. This must have been doubly necessary after those nineteen years of lawlessness.

3. "He never sits down," says the letter before referred to, "except on horseback, or when he is eating. He has for ever in his hands bows, swords, hunting-nets, or arrows, except he is at council or at his books;" for, like all his family, he was fond of hunting and hawking. He was also very resolute and determined about everything. If he once loved a person, he loved him always; and if he once disliked a person, hardly ever altered his mind. He was a good soldier, but above all things, "glorious in peace, which he desires for his people as the most precious of earthly gifts. . . . No one is more gentle to the distressed, more affable to the poor, more overbearing to the proud. . . . No one could be more dignified in speaking, more cautious at table, more moderate in drinking, more splendid in gifts, more generous in alms."

4. With all this dignity and affability, he was subject to the most furious and undignified fits of passion. They say that when in a rage he was more like a wild beast than a man; his eyes, which were generally calm and dove-like, flashed fire and were like lightning; he would roll on the floor, striking and tearing whatever came in his way; he would gnaw the very straw out of his bed. The princes of his race were all subject to these uncontrollable and most unprincely rages; they believed that they were partly descended from a demon, and accounted for them in that way.

From this description we should judge that Henry was likely to be a great king, but we should expect also that with that fierce temper he might meet with many misfortunes. His reign was indeed a very grand one, but we cannot say his life was happy.

5. He made one great and fatal mistake in the very beginning of his career, and in a most important point—his marriage. While still quite young, before he was King of England at all, he had married; not choosing a wise, good, and loving wife, but one who, though not at all good, was very rich. She was older than he was; she had already been

His
marriage.

married to the French king, and had behaved so wickedly that he was obliged to put her away; but she was the heiress of great lands in France, of Guienne and Poitou. It is melancholy to think that this clever and, in many ways, so good young prince should have chosen so bad a wife. This false step of his was at the root of many of the great misfortunes which came upon his later years.

6. However, he obtained with his wife Eleanor her great inheritance, and so, in one way and another, he was one of the most powerful sovereigns of the time. He had England

His dominions.

and Normandy from his mother and his grandfather, Maine and Anjou from his father, Poitou and Guienne from his wife. Thus England was but a part, and not at all the greatest part, of his dominions. Besides all these, he was over-lord (in a certain way) of Scotland and Wales, and became also over-lord of Brittany in France. During his reign, too, a great part of Ireland was conquered, of which he also was over-lord.

7. His surname, Plantagenet, was not such a descriptive one as Beau-clerc, but it grew to be very famous. It only means "the plant of broom." It had become a sort of fashion in those days, and was thought very meritorious and religious, for great men to take up some humble name as a sort of disguise; and it is said that Henry's father, from some such motive, had chosen to call himself by the name of this wild and common flower, and to wear it as a badge in his hat.

8. Now Henry Plantagenet became King of England, and, as we read, "all folk loved him." We may be sure they did not love him less for one of the very first things he did, which was to pull down an immense number of those terrible castles. It has been said that he destroyed 1100 of them. The land must have begun to breathe again as soon as that awful weight was lifted off it. Henry brought the lords of all the castles which were left, to be obedient to him and to the laws, and he established justice and peace everywhere. What a contrast to those nineteen years of misery and fighting.

9. The nation was now happy and united. It was nearly 100 years since the Battle of Hastings. Nobody living could remember it. Only a few old men must have still lived who had, perhaps, seen William the Conqueror in their young days, or recollected the ravaging of Northumberland. It no longer seemed as if there were two different nations living in England. So

Union of English and Normans.

many Norman gentlemen had married the daughters and heiresses of Englishmen that the distinction was almost forgotten. The sons of those marriages, living in their English mothers' and English grandfathers' home, surrounded by their property and servants, must have felt like Englishmen. The king was not exactly an Englishman, but neither was he exactly a Norman, for his father was the French Count of Anjou; but he partly belonged to both, for he was the great-grandson of William the Norman, and the grandson of the English Matilda.

10. Still the two languages went on. The upper classes, the lords, and the bishops, and the courtiers, were mostly accustomed to talk French, as their fathers and grandfathers had done, but they were nevertheless called Englishmen. The lowest class of all, the poor men in the country, all talked English still—the old-fashioned English, which is sometimes called Anglo-Saxon. But most of the people in the country, perhaps all, except in this very lowest class, could talk both languages, or could at least understand them when they heard them spoken. And there was no longer any feeling of their being two nations.

11. As if Henry had not lands and titles enough already, he soon began to cast his eyes about for more, and set his heart upon conquering Ireland. Strange to say, he obtained permission from the Pope to do this. We shall soon see that Henry was not in general much inclined to humble himself before the Church, and we might well wonder what the Pope could have had to do with this matter; but it was doubtless because of his claim to be the lord of all islands that Henry applied for his sanction, intending, as soon as he had time, to master that country. Ireland.

12. It seems strange that we have hitherto heard so little about this great island, so near a neighbour to England. Now and then we get some little hint or fragment of information about it, but that is all. Hundreds of years before, Ireland had been noted for holiness and learning. While our forefathers were still heathen barbarians, the Irish had held on to their Christianity, and had sent missionaries to England. Ireland indeed was called "the isle of saints." But by this time they had fallen from their high estate, their Christianity had sunk into superstition, and their learning had vanished quite away.

The Irish had had as much trouble as the English with the Danes, and a great many had settled down in the country. Once Harold had taken refuge there in the days of Edward the

Confessor. We know too that the English used to sell slaves to Ireland from the market at Bristol. But on the whole there was not much intercourse between the two islands.

13. Now, however, the English and their king began to take a real interest in the affairs of Ireland, and to covet the "emerald isle" for themselves. We have the history of all this written (in Latin) by a very clever man, an archdeacon named Gerald, or Giraldus, who was chosen by Henry II. as tutor to one of his sons, and who was a near relation to some of the knights who fought in Ireland. He also went there himself, and has told us what he saw, and a great deal more that he *heard*. What he says that he himself knew we may readily believe, but the things which were told him, and which he as readily believed, are truly astonishing and ludicrous. It shows us what the credulity of those times was, when a well-educated man, very proud too of his wisdom and good sense, will, in all good faith, record such tales. For example, he was quite prepared to believe that men and women were sometimes changed into wild beasts. He tells a long story of some benighted travellers who were greatly alarmed by a wolf coming up and speaking to them. The wolf, seeing they were frightened, "added some orthodox words, referring to God." The said wolf, after a great many other strange things, "gave them his company during the whole night at the fire, behaving more like a man than a beast," and telling them that he had been punished for his sins by being turned from a man into a wolf, by a "saint" in the neighbourhood. This last rather confirms what the archdeacon tells us very calmly in another place, that "the saints of this country appear to be of a vindictive temper" even in the life that is after death, and he gives us his way of accounting for it; namely, that there was no other means of keeping the thieves and other impious persons in any sort of order.

14. But though he was thus ready to accept whatever marvels were told him by others, the facts which he relates of his own knowledge seem perfectly accurate, and show him to have been a good observer and reasoner. We will now turn to some of these facts.

15. The Irish people were at this time in a very savage condition. It will be remembered that they were of the Celtic family, nearly allied to the Welsh (or ancient Britons) and the Scotch Highlanders. Though they had learnt the Christian religion so many hundred years ago, their Christianity had now fallen so low

The Irish
people.

that it did not seem to do them much good. They had made hardly any progress in civilization. In some of the more remote parts they had not yet learned Christianity, nor did they even know how to till the ground, to plough, to sow, or to make bread. Like the old Britons, what little clothing they had was made of skins. They lived on flesh, fish, and milk, and had never seen either bread or cheese. Some of these men fell in with a few sailors from England, and when they left them, carried back a loaf and a cheese, that they might astonish their countrymen by the sight of the provisions the strangers ate. They had never been baptized, nor heard of the name of Christ.

16. Even in the more civilized parts they did but little in the way of tillage, though the ground was very fertile; nor would they take much trouble in planting fruit-trees. Work of any sort, indeed, was highly disagreeable to them. This is what Archdeacon Gerald says of their character: "Whatever natural gifts they possess are excellent, but in whatever requires industry they are worthless." The one thing about which they would take pains was music, and in that he says "they were incomparably more skilful than any other nation I have ever seen." They played on two instruments, the harp and the tabor, which is a sort of little drum.

17. Though this taste and love for music one might have thought would have tamed and softened their nature, they seem to have been frightfully cruel and ferocious. In the war with the English, which Gerald describes, one of the Irish kings, the very one on whose side the English were fighting, had a heap of his enemies' heads laid before him, 200 in number; and he "turned them over one by one in order to recognize them, thrice lifted his hands to heaven in the excess of his joy, and with a loud voice returned thanks to God most high. Amongst them was the head of one he mortally hated above all the rest, and taking it up by the ears and hair, he tore it with his teeth."

18. Ireland was at this time divided into five kingdoms, the kings of which were always quarrelling and fighting. At last one of them, Dermot, the King of Leinster, was driven out of his dominions altogether, and thereupon bethought him of getting help from the powerful King of England. He accordingly crossed over to Bristol, but finding that Henry was now in the south of France, he travelled after him there, and, obtaining an audience, he promised that if Henry would take his part and set him back in his kingdom he would own him for his lord, and become his vassal.

19. Henry had no time just then to attend to this business himself, but he gave the Irishman leave to seek help among his subjects, and gave any of his subjects who chose to help him full permission to do so. Dermot accordingly came back to England, and by and bye found helpers, the principal of whom was the Earl of Pembroke, generally called **Earl Richard Strongbow**. He and some other English and Welsh noblemen and gentlemen, the cousins of our friend the archdeacon among them, went over to Ireland with their men. Though they were all of Norman descent, on the father's side at least, that name was quite dropped now, and Gerald always calls them the English. He himself is generally called Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald the Welshman.

20. After some hard fighting and much cruelty they conquered their opponents. One instance will show how hard-hearted many of the English or Anglo-Normans still were. After taking the town of Waterford, they had in their hands seventy prisoners, the principal men of the town. There was a discussion among the leaders what should be done with these men. One of them, named Raymond, wished to be merciful to them, and allow them to be ransomed; but another, making a fierce speech demanding their death, his comrades approved of it, and the wretched prisoners had their bones broken, and were then thrown into the sea and drowned. What should we say if an English general treated his prisoners in such a way now?

21. After these fights and successes, Richard Strongbow married Dermot's daughter Eva, and when, not long after, Dermot died, Strongbow, in right of his wife, became King of Leinster. But this was rather too much for Henry II., who wished to be king himself, and accordingly Strongbow thought it prudent to give up the kingship to his master; Henry allowing him, in return, to keep very large possessions for himself.

22. Whilst all this was going on, and the English gaining more and more of the mastery, the clergy of Ireland held an assembly, in which they all agreed that their troubles were a punishment sent on the Irish by God for their sins, and, above all, for the wicked trade in slaves which they had so long carried on with the English, and it was therefore decreed that all the English slaves in the country should be set at liberty. This, I believe, is the very last time that we hear of the slave-trade in England.

23. Henry at last found time to come over to Ireland himself, and nearly all the kings and chiefs of the country, especially

Roderic of Connaught, who was the head of all, 1171.
 submitted to him as their over-lord, and did him **Submission**
 homage. This was about Christmas time, and many **of the Irish**
 of the Irish princes came to Dublin to visit the **princes.**
 king, "and were much astonished at the sumptuousness of his
 entertainments, and the splendour of his household." It is said
 that a very large hall was built on purpose for the king to hold
 his court. It reminds us of the ancient Britons (relations of
 the Irish) to hear that this hall was built, "after the fashion of
 the country," of white wicker-work, peeled osiers, for we all
 remember the "palaces" of the Britons, and their first little
 Christian church at Glastonbury. Wicker-work dwellings seem
 to have been a specialty of the Celtic races; we shall hear of
 them again among other branches of that family.

24. King Henry received and feasted the Irish chieftains, and
 Gerald says that at these feasts they learnt to eat cranes, "which
 before they loathed." He stayed in Ireland a few months, and, as
 he had done in England, restored peace and order. With the
 help of the clergy he also made many laws for improving the
 habits of the people. But after he went away **The English**
 things soon became as bad as ever, and the English **settlers.**
 noblemen who remained behind grew almost as
 savage and wild as the natives. They established themselves
 chiefly along the eastern and southern coast, and the part where
 they lived was afterwards called "The Pale;" they and the
 native Irish hated each other bitterly for a time, though after-
 wards the English allied themselves to their wild neighbours,
 and became, as was said, "more Irish than the Irish."

We cannot see that any lasting good came of the conquest of
 Ireland, such as it was, except that Henry added another lord-
 ship to his titles.

LECTURE XIX.—CHURCH AND STATE.

Disputes between Church and State. Investitures. Ecclesiastical courts.
 Thomas à Becket—as chancellor—as archbishop. Excommunication.
 Death of Becket. He is looked on as a saint. Henry does penance.

1. WE must now turn our attention to the great disputes which had been going on so long between the king and the Church. As was noticed above, we never found anything of this sort before the Norman Conquest. In those old times the king, the earls, and the thanes agreed perfectly well with the archbishops and bishops. No one had ever thought of any distinction between Church and State. Very little was heard of the Pope, except when an archbishop had to go to Rome for his pall, as a sort of token that he was the head or principal bishop, and that the Church of England owned his supremacy.

2. But things were much changed now, and we have very often to hear of great disputes and fierce quarrels between the king and the Church. We must not imagine that this was because there was any difference in their religious opinions. In the Protestant Reformation, several centuries later, there were such differences; and Protestant countries like ours now refuse to accept many things which the Roman Church teaches: we do not pray to the Virgin Mary and the saints, we have a different belief about the sacrament, and many other things. At the time we are speaking of this was not so. The king, the lords, and all the people believed just the same as the Pope and the clergy, and the disputes were not about doctrines and creeds, but were all about power and mastery.

3. The principal matters of dispute were two. The first really came to the question whether the bishops and archbishops were subjects of the king or of the Pope. This had begun to be a matter of contention even between Henry I. and Anselm, but as they were both moderate and reasonable, they did not come to an open quarrel. The

king demanded that they should do homage to him like the other great lords, and that he should have the power of giving them a ring and a staff, which were the signs of their office, as the old kings of England had always done. But the Pope had now begun to claim this power for himself or his legate, and to say that the king had no right at all to the homage of the spiritual lords.

4. The other matter in dispute was, that there were now two sets of courts of law : one for lay-people, and one for clergymen. This plan had been brought in by William the Conqueror, but it was found to work very badly. Henry

The ecclesiastical courts.

II. determined that if a clergyman committed a crime he should be tried by the judge, and punished as any other man would be. The clergy would not hear of this ; neither they nor their bishops would submit to be under the temporal power, as it was called.

5. By this time the law of the celibacy of the clergy, that the clergy should have no wives, was quite established. This law, as we know, had been introduced by Dunstan about 200 years before. But the contest had gone on even up to the time of Henry I., who was inclined to take the part of the married clergy. The 'Chronicle' tell us of a great council which was held in London, A.D. 1129, which began on Monday and ended on Friday, consisting of bishops, abbots, and other churchmen. "When it came forth, it was all about archdeacons' wives, and priests' wives, that they should leave them by St. Andrew's mass ; and he who would not do that should forego his church, and his house, and his home. This ordained the Archbishop of Canterbury, and all the suffragan bishops who were then in England ; and the king gave them all leave to go home, and so they went home ; and all the decrees stood for nought ; all held their wives by the king's leave, as they did before." But this did not last much longer ; and now the clergy were all unmarried, or if any of them had wives it was quite in secret, and the wives were insultingly called "concubines."

6. Thus they were like a separate nation in the midst of the nation. If the archbishops and the bishops were all under the Pope, and not under the king, and the clergy were all under the bishops' courts, and not under the king's judges, and none of them had any wives and families to make them feel like other people, they seemed quite distinct from all the rest of the nation. Henry could not stand this. He loved power and mastery ; but he also saw clearly that it could not be for the real good and

honour of the country to have two masters, the king and the Pope. The celibacy of the clergy he left untouched, but on the other two points he was determined.

7. Before going farther into the history of this strife, it is well to notice that in the end, and after a fight of many hundred years, the English nation has decided that the king (or the civil power) was in the right. All the great principles that Henry I. and Henry II. strove for are now the law of the land; and we all, or nearly all, feel that it is well for both clergy and people that it should be so. But seven or eight hundred years ago matters were in a very different condition from what they are now, and at that time the people almost always sided with the clergy and the Church against the king and the State. Let us try and see why.

8. Even with all the pride of the popes, and sometimes of the higher clergy, even though many of the lower clergy were very different from what they should have been, still on
The Church and the people. the whole the churchmen were more merciful, more just, and less cruel than the laymen. We have heard much of the tyranny and barbarity of the barons and soldiers. The clergy, in their different ways, did what they could to check and over-awe the tyrants, and to protect the helpless and poor. We saw that it was greatly through the exertions of the bishops that the peace was made at last between Stephen and Matilda. The popes, too, often used the authority they had won, in restraining the unjust and ambitious designs of quarrelsome princes and kings.

9. Another way in which the Church was a safeguard and a refuge in those days of fighting and plundering, was by what
Sanctuary. was called the right of sanctuary. If a person were being pursued by his enemies, and in danger of being seized and killed, he might take shelter in a church or churchyard or other sacred place, and no one would dare to touch him. To hurt or kill any one in a church was considered an almost impossible and unpardonable crime; and no doubt many a poor creature's life was saved in that way from the ruffians, who would know neither pity nor fear in any other place. It had been one of the worst outrages in the days of Stephen that "they spared neither church nor churchyard."

10. Again, in those ecclesiastical courts which Henry wished to put down, they not only tried offending priests, but managed to lay claim to a good many other people too. For
Discipline. instance, if any one could write in those ignorant

days, he was at once looked on as a clergyman, clerk, or learned person, and could be tried by these courts. This was a great boon, because their punishments were not nearly so severe as the punishments of the king's judges. They did not put out people's eyes, nor cut off their hands and feet; they never went beyond beating and imprisonment. Moreover, the clergy were always known as the protectors of widows and orphans.

Thus, to fully understand the case we must try to fancy ourselves back in the very times, and think which side we might have taken then.

11. Though there were no schools for poor people, and not many for rich, and though the Church services were said in Latin, yet the clergy took some pains to teach the people. It is very difficult for us to imagine what **Teaching.** it must have been to live in a time when there were no Bibles. There is now hardly a baby of four or five years old in England who could not tell us about Adam and Eve, Joseph, Moses, the life and death of Christ, almost as familiarly as about its own brothers and sisters. In England, at least, nearly everybody reads the Bible, and it is taught so universally as almost to form the groundwork of education.

12. In those days there were neither Bibles nor schools for the people; yet still they knew a good deal about the Scripture stories. And they learnt it principally in two ways; **Pictures.** not by sermons, as we should have expected, for it seems that at this time there were very few sermons preached in churches for the people, but only in monasteries for the monks. One way was, that all the church walls were covered with pictures; very often of the Bible histories, but sometimes of the lives of the saints. Almost all these old pictures have perished in England, though some of the very churches are still standing. But the pictures have either faded away or been plastered and white-washed over. Sometimes when an old church is being repaired, and the walls are well scraped, faint shadows of frescoes appear, which, if not painted at this very time, were painted only a little later. In Italy they often made these pictures in mosaic of coloured stones and gold, which will last almost for ever; besides that even painting is much more durable in that climate than it is in ours. There we may see many churches whose walls and roofs are like the pages of a great picture-book; and from them the people learnt something about the creation of the world and other Bible narratives; or, to speak more correctly, they learnt,

at least, how the painters thought the things they were painting happened.

A very old writer and saint, who was defending the use of pictures in churches, to which some people in his days objected, just as many English people do now, wrote thus : "I am too poor to possess books ; I have no leisure for reading ; I enter the church, choked with the cares of the world ; the glowing colours attract my sight and delight my eyes like a flowery meadow, and the glory of God steals imperceptibly into my soul ; I gaze on the fortitude of the martyr, and the crown with which he is rewarded, and the fire of holy emulation kindles within me, and I fall down and worship God. . . ."

13. But the priests had another way of teaching the same things, which to us appears very strange indeed. They not only had pictures painted, but they acted the scenes.

**The sacred
drama.**

In our days, if we go to the theatre we generally go for amusement, or perhaps, now and then, for instruction ; but in those times it was not meant for amusement at all, but for religion. The play was a scene out of the Bible, or the life of a saint ; the actors were clergymen, and the theatre was a church. This was when the practice was first begun. On some special occasion or festival, when part of the prayers had been read—in the morning before the Te Deum, in the afternoon before the Magnificat—the clergy and choristers would act a sacred drama. After a time, most likely that more people might see it, they would have a stage in the churchyard and act it there. They would perform the creation of the world, the fall of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah building the ark, &c. ; and again, the shepherds of Bethlehem, with the angel, the wise men from the East, the crucifixion, &c. Every now and then, at appropriate places, some doctor or expositor would come forward to explain what was being represented, would preach a little sermon, or give a little advice to the people.

14. They took a great deal of pains with these plays. When they acted the creation, in order to show the making of the birds and beasts, they collected as many strange animals as they could get alive, and turned them loose ; or they would let fly a flock of pigeons. They dressed in the best costumes they could manage ; some were dressed for angels and some for devils. Those who acted saints had gilded wigs and beards to look like a glory ; the angels had white robes and wings ; the devil had a dress of leather, covered with hair and feathers, and ending at the hands and feet in claws.

15. After a time the rich tradesmen got up plays of the same kind, which were acted in the streets; and they continued to be very popular for about 500 years. The plays out of the Bible history were called "Mysteries," and those from the lives of the saints "Miracles." Though this was all done very seriously, and some of it made as awful as they knew how, they had here and there a little fun. There was one great joke about Noah's wife, because she would not go into the ark; and there was also a little jesting among the shepherds in the field before the angel came to sing. Fragments of these old plays are still rudely acted in old-fashioned places at Christmas time. We may be sure these performances must have been a great excitement and delight to the people in those days, when they had no books, and so little to interest or amuse them, strange and shocking as we might think them now.

It was probably for all these reasons put together that the people in general sided with the Church in the great quarrel which, after long smouldering, at last broke out into flames.

16. Henry II. being determined to get the mastery of the Church, took the opportunity of the Archbishop of Canterbury's death to appoint to that high post a special friend and favourite of his own, thinking that he would be a great help to him in carrying out his plans. This favourite was Thomas à Becket, a very famous name, well-known to us all.

**Thomas à
Becket.**

17. Of course he was a clergyman, or he could not have been made an archbishop; but he was only a deacon, which is the lowest rank in holy orders, and he had as yet hardly lived as a churchman at all. He was Henry's chancellor, his most confidential adviser, and intimate friend. A great many stories are told to show what a fine gentleman he was; how gay and splendid and magnificent. At one time he was sent as ambassador to France, and he travelled in such a gorgeous style that the astonished French people exclaimed, "What manner of man must the King of England be, since his chancellor travels in this fashion!" In the procession which attended him, besides knights, squires, grooms, and singing boys, there were hounds and hawks, waggon-loads of plate and other luxuries, and, strangest of all, twelve monkeys on horseback. From the time of Solomon onwards there seems to have been a strange liking for these grotesque creatures in the midst of great pomp and splendour; they were perhaps looked on as a kind of foil. In the grand picture

The courtier.

of Alexander and the Persian princesses in the National Gallery we find an ape in a very prominent position.

18. Another account gives us an odd idea of the habits of that time. We are told that the house he lived in was so large and handsome that it might rather be called a palace. In it he used to receive numberless guests of all ranks, and feast them in a sumptuous way, with the choicest food and richest wine, served in gold and silver vessels, by attendants very finely dressed. Sometimes there would be so many visitors that there was not room for them at table. So the chancellor gave orders that the floor of the apartment should be strewn with fresh hay or straw every day, in order that the visitors who had to sit on the floor might not spoil their handsome clothes. We, who do not eat off gold and silver, nor drink the richest wines every day, should yet consider it rather ignominious to have to sit on straw on the floor, like horses in a stable! But this spreading of clean straw, or in the summer of fresh green rushes every day, was looked on as another specimen of Becket's finery and magnificence.

19. This was the man whom Henry chose to be Archbishop of Canterbury, expecting that he would assist him in all measures for bringing the clergy under the law. But he was
 1162. bitterly disappointed. No sooner was Becket made archbishop, than he altered his whole way of life. He seems to have been the sort of character who could do nothing by halves. Having gone to the extreme in the character of a fine man of the

The saint. world, he would now go to the extreme in that of a saint (according to the notions men had of a saint in those days). He sent off all his fine servants, his cooks and cup-bearers; he left off all his gay clothing and dainty living; he surrounded himself with monks and beggars (whose feet he washed every day); he clothed himself in dirty sackcloth, eat the coarsest food, and drank bitter water.

20. Some people believe that he did all this for show and to get himself talked about and revered; but, to do him justice, it ought to be remembered that part, at least, of it he kept secret. It was not known till after his death that he wore the hair-shirt, and that he was scourged every day. He no doubt thought, according to the spirit of the time, that he was pleasing God by using his body so ill; and it was partly on account of this austerity, and the extreme dirtiness of the sackcloth, that he was first called a saint.

21. Now it was that Henry found out his mistake. Instead of taking his part, the new archbishop at once began to oppose

him. Henry's principal plans for bringing the clergy under the control of the State and the general law of the land were put into writing at a great council which he held at Clarendon, and they were called the "Constitutions of Clarendon." 1164.

Becket was persuaded to give his consent to them ; but he did it in such a grudging and unwilling way that every one thought he was only trying to gain time, and was acting deceitfully. Immediately afterwards he sent to ask forgiveness of the Pope for having consented at all.

22. In all the long disputes that went on between the king and Becket, both perhaps thought they had the right on their side ; to this very hour people are divided about it. There is no doubt that Becket was very proud and obstinate, but he believed that he was fighting the battle of the Church and of God, and there is something grand about his courage which one cannot help admiring.

23. At one time he had to flee from the country in disguise, and remained a long while abroad. While he was there a fresh grievance occurred. The king, who had seen how much misery and trouble were caused by a disputed succession, resolved to do more than even his grandfather had done. Instead of making every one swear oaths to obey his son after his own death, he determined to have him crowned king during his lifetime. The crowning of the King of England had always been considered the especial right of the Archbishop of Canterbury, but he being now out of the country, the Archbishop of York was called on to perform the ceremony in his stead, to the great indignation of Becket. Before this time there had often been discussions between York and Canterbury as to which should be the greatest, though, as Fuller says, "we have hitherto passed them over in silence, not conceiving ourselves bound to trouble the reader every time those archbishops troubled themselves." Nor was the dispute appeased even after Becket's death, for the two next archbishops had such a quarrel about it, at a great meeting of the clergy, that their partisans came to fighting with fists, sticks, and staves ; "while the Archbishop of York, in struggling to get the place of honour from the Archbishop of Canterbury, fairly sate down in his lap." Thus we see how much of "poor human nature" was mingled in these great religious conflicts.

Becket in
exile.

24. We are not to suppose that while Becket was abroad he could do no mischief in England. He had a terrible power,

**The power
of excom-
munication.**

which in those days the Church claimed, and which kept the most stout-hearted in awe. This was the power of excommunication, or turning an offending person out of the communion of the Church. There were two sorts of excommunication, the greater and the less. The less even was a very serious punishment. It prevented the excommunicated person from receiving any of the sacraments, or from holding any office in the State; but the greater one, which was only used in desperate cases, was far more horrible. It is very easy for us to speak the word lightly, but we shall hardly do that when we realize what it meant at the time. The person who fell under the "anathema," or greater excommunication, was cursed in body and soul, at home and abroad, going out and coming in, in towns and streets, fields and meadows, by land and water, sleeping and waking, standing, sitting, and lying down, speaking and silent, day and night. The heavens were to be as brass to him, and the earth as iron. God was prayed to afflict him with hunger and thirst, with poverty and want, with cold and fever, with blindness and madness. All things belonging to him were cursed, even the dog which guarded him and the cock which waked him. No one was to take pity on him or to help him; his dead body was to be thrown to dogs and wolves, and his soul to be eternally tormented.

25. However awful and horrible we should feel it to hear words like these uttered by any one, not to say by a minister of Christ the merciful, we should know they would and could do no harm to any one but the cruel man who spoke them; but at this time every one believed that it would all come true, that the curse would be fulfilled.

Thus it gave a terrible power to a proud priest like Becket. While he was abroad he pronounced excommunication on several of the king's servants, and every one thought the next thing would be that he would excommunicate the king himself. Henry fell into one of his fearful rages when he heard of it; he tore off his clothes and threw them about the room, he rolled on the floor, and gnawed the straw and rushes with which it was strewn.

26. After a time a sort of peace was patched up, and Becket was allowed to return to England. He did not return in a peaceful spirit, however, for he was still greatly enraged at the Archbishop of York for having crowned the young Prince Henry; and he had got letters from the Pope excommunicating him and two other

**Becket's
return.**

bishops who had assisted at the ceremony. The people crowded to meet Becket, giving him a joyful welcome, and blessing him as coming in the name of the Lord; but the bishops who had been excommunicated went across the sea to the king, who was now in France. We cannot feel surprised that Henry was enraged. He was seized with another of his ungovernable fits of fury, crying out about the cowards that he nourished at his table, and saying, "Will no man deliver me from this man?" Bitterly he repented those rash words afterwards, but he could never call them back, never undo the deed they wrought.

27. Four of his fierce knights, hearing the words, and over-eager to fulfil his will, hastened to Canterbury, where the archbishop was already smarting under a series of insults. It is a curious sign of how the old pride of the man of the world still lived under the sackcloth of the saint, that one of these insults which he felt most keenly, and even referred to in the last sermon he ever preached, was, that some of his enemies had cut off the tails of his horses.

28. When the knights arrived there was a stormy interview; the archbishop's friends and servants were alarmed, but his own spirit only rose the higher. They implored him to take refuge in the cathedral, but he would not seem to go there for protection. He waited till the hour when it was his duty to attend the evening service, nor would he then go in haste, but with all his usual dignity. Neither would he permit the doors of the cathedral to be closed, saying, with the nobler pride of a Christian priest, that "the church should not be turned into a castle." The knights rushed in, crying out through the darkness, "Where is the traitor?" Receiving no answer, they exclaimed, "Where is the archbishop?"

Becket at once came forward in his white robes and confronted them, saying, "I am no traitor, but the archbishop and priest of God." There was a short struggle, and after receiving many blows, Becket, commending
1170.
his soul to God, fell dead; murdered in his own
His death.
cathedral, the sacred mother-church of England.

29. But by his death he won the victory. It is impossible to describe the horror which this murder caused, not only throughout England, but through great part of Europe. The *sacrilege* (that is, the murder being committed in the church), the archbishop's courage and dignity, the finding of his hair-shirt hidden under his clothes, the admiration of the common people and the monks, all together combined to raise Becket straight to the

rank of a martyred saint. When the king heard what had happened he was appalled at the fruit of his own hasty words. He shut himself up, robed himself in sackcloth and ashes, refused food, and called God to witness that he was in no way guilty of the archbishop's death. He continued shut up for five weeks, continually crying, Alas ! alas !

30. The Pope, on his part, shut himself up in bitter grief and anger. There was great fear that he would excommunicate the King of England. Henry's proud spirit was so broken that he sent messengers and made a most humble submission to the Pope, renouncing the "Constitutions of Clarendon," and yielding up all the things about which he and Becket had contested. After this, and while he was in France, the Pope granted him absolution.

31. But this submission and this absolution were not enough. Great troubles were gathering around the king. His sons rebelled against him ; his wife took their part. Some of the English barons revolted ; they were indeed very angry at having their castles taken away, and being kept in such strict order by the king. The Scotch invaded the north of England. The Earl of Flanders, with Prince Henry, was about to invade it on the east. Everybody believed—Henry himself believed—that all this trouble came as a punishment for Becket's murder, and that he had not yet humbled himself enough. There had been a terrible storm in the winter, and when the people heard the rolling thunder they thought that it was the blood of St. Thomas roaring to God for vengeance.

32. Henry came over to England, resolved to do what he could to appease the martyr. He landed at Southampton, and immediately began to live on bread and water. He rode

1174.
The king's
penance.

to Canterbury as fast as he could. When he came in sight of the cathedral towers he dismounted from his horse and went on foot. As soon as he reached the city he cast off his usual dress and put on that of a penitent, a woollen shirt and a coarse cloak. He walked barefoot through the crowded streets, marking the rough stones with his blood, till he reached the cathedral gates. Then he knelt, prayed, groaned, and wept by Becket's tomb. He took off the cloak and was scourged with a rod by all the bishops and abbots who were present, and by each of the eighty monks. After all this he was declared to be fully pardoned ; but he spent the whole night barefoot and fasting within the cathedral.

33. It is no wonder that a day and night so terrible made him very ill. When he got back to London he fell into a dangerous fever. But a very strange thing happened; what we should now call a "coincidence," but what looked to people then like a miracle. The penance had taken place on a Saturday. On the next Thursday at midnight, as the king lay ill in his bed, a loud knocking was heard at the gates. It was a messenger from the north, who insisted on being taken to the king's chamber. He brought news that the royal army had gained a great victory on that very Saturday, and that the King of Scotland was taken prisoner. The astonished king sprang, overjoyed, from his bed, and with a full heart returned thanks to God and St. Thomas. On the very same Saturday the fleet with which the Earl of Flanders and young Henry intended to invade the kingdom was driven back.

34. This history shows what a real belief every one in those days had in the power of the saints. It was still quite as strong as when Cnut strove to appease the martyred Edmund and Alphege. Though Becket, we cannot doubt, was honest and conscientious in what he aimed at and strove for, he was very far indeed from our present idea of a saint; but in the esteem of that time he was one of the very greatest the world ever saw.

A splendid shrine was made to contain his bones, and people flocked from all parts to visit it and pray to the martyr. And we are told that "glorious miracles" were wrought at his tomb. Sick people were cured, the dumb **Miracles.** spoke, the blind saw, even the dead were raised to life. One miracle, which, if not very "glorious," was at least very strange, was fully believed when the story was first told, and is another instance of how ready people were to give credit to wonderful tales in those days. It is certainly true that the King of France came on a pilgrimage to Canterbury "to implore the patronage of the blessed martyr;" this was the first time a king of France ever set foot on English ground. He gave very handsome offerings to the holy place, and to the monks a valuable golden cup, and 100 tuns of wine; but while he was praying the archbishop noticed on his finger a magnificent ring, with a most splendid jewel in it. The archbishop (very modestly) begged the king to present this ring to the shrine. The king, however, not being willing to part with it, offered instead 100,000 florins, with which the archbishop was fully satisfied, as he well might be. "But scarcely had the refusal been uttered, when the stone leaped from the ring and fastened itself

to the shrine, as if a goldsmith had fixed it there." The miracle of course convinced the king, who left the jewel and the florins as well ; and the gem was the grandest ornament of the shrine, which was all blazing with gold, diamonds, sapphires, and emeralds. We shall hear more about the Canterbury pilgrimages in the future, as one of the most famous books in the English language was written about them.

35. Not only in England, but in foreign lands Becket's fame spread far and wide, as the hero and martyr of the Church, and foreigners were as anxious for relics of the saint as Englishmen. Parts of his arms, teeth, and brains were long treasured up in Rome, Florence, Lisbon, and many other places. His fame even reached the distant island of Iceland ; and in the thirteenth century his life was translated out of Latin into Icelandic, for the benefit of the people of that wild country.

LECTURE XX.—THE SONS OF HENRY.

Henry's family troubles. His death. Richard Cœur-de-Lion. Chivalry.
Richard's absence from England. John Sans-terre. Prince Arthur.
Loss of Normandy.

1. AFTER the strange events of his day of penance Henry's spirit revived; he felt that he was pardoned; his health returned; and he put himself at the head of an army. The English people gathered round him, and the revolt of the barons was put down without a blow. The truth was that the nation was really faithful, and attached to the king's government. It was only some of the older nobility, who had lands in Normandy, and still felt like Normans, who rebelled. The other barons, who felt like Englishmen, nearly all the bishops, and the great towns stood firm on the king's side now that he was no longer fighting in a matter which touched their religion. Thus after his pressing danger he rose stronger than ever.

Henry
prosperes.

2. Nor did he entirely give up his schemes for the control of the Church and the clergy; he carried out many of his principles still, though the "Constitutions of Clarendon" had been renounced; and matters were left, as they so often were and are in England, somewhat undecided, each party having to give and take in turn.

3. But this great king's troubles were not over yet. All the later years of his life were made miserable by the ingratitude and rebellion of his sons. Considering what his marriage had been, it is not wonderful that his family life was so unhappy. One son rebelled after another; he forgave them again and again; but they broke his heart at last. As all this was mostly in France, we cannot enter into the details. Henry, who was to have been King of England, died young, before his father. Geoffrey, the third, who had been married to the heiress of Brittany, also died. Richard, the second, was as undutiful as his brothers. The worst and youngest, John, was his father's favourite; Henry said he was the only one who

Family
troubles.

had never rebelled against him. When, at last, the forlorn and aged king found that John too was a traitor, and had sided with his enemies, it was his death-blow. He cared for nothing more in the world, and died. One of his illegitimate children was alone faithful to him, and tended his last hours.

His death. nothing more in the world, and died. One of his illegitimate children was alone faithful to him, and tended his last hours.

4. The next king of England reigned for ten years. In all that time he was only in England twice, and then but for a few months. He could hardly be looked on as an Englishman at all. Yet he is even to this day a popular king. Every one likes the name of Richard the Lion-hearted. When we come to look at his life and character this seems strange. He was a very fierce and quarrelsome man ; he had been an undutiful son ; so much so, that it was said and believed that when he went to meet his father's funeral the blood flowed from the dead body ; showing, according to the old superstition, that Richard was in some sense his murderer. As to his government of England, all he ever seemed to care about was to wring out of the nation all the money he could. And, as has been truly said, it may be all very well to have the heart of a lion, but it would have been far better to have the heart of a man. Yet we all know he is a popular hero and favourite to this day. Why can this be ?

1189.

Richard I.

king. Every one likes the name of Richard the Lion-hearted. When we come to look at his life and character this seems strange. He was a very fierce and quarrelsome man ; he had been an undutiful son ; so much so, that it was said and believed that when he went to meet his father's funeral the blood flowed from the dead body ; showing, according to the old superstition, that Richard was in some sense his murderer. As to his government of England, all he ever seemed to care about was to wring out of the nation all the money he could. And, as has been truly said, it may be all very well to have the heart of a lion, but it would have been far better to have the heart of a man. Yet we all know he is a popular hero and favourite to this day. Why can this be ?

5. The truth seems to be, that though we cannot look on Richard as a good, or great, or wise king, he was in many ways the very model of a knight. In these days we do not think very much of a knight. It is only a title of no great honour. But we think still a good deal of the word "chivalrous." That is the French or Romance word for "knightly." The French word for knight was "chevalier," which means one who rides on horseback. The German word for knight means the same thing, a *rider* (reiter, ritter), and it came to be a title of some honour, because those who could afford to ride on horseback were the richer and more high-born people.

Chivalry.

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6. Gradually other ideas grew up about the name ; and in the days of Richard I., and some time both before and after, the one thing which was thought of and desired was to be a good knight. Even a great king was not satisfied with being wise, clever, honest, and brave unless he were also a good knight—chivalrous. So that we cannot at all enter into the spirit of that age without trying to understand a little of what chivalry meant.

7. We will first look at its good side. We cannot fail

to have observed that the one great occupation of a gentleman's life in those days was fighting, and we have had to notice over and over again how fierce and savage some of the barons and warriors were, for this constant fighting and killing men was sure to harden their nature and to make them brutal. The very heart of chivalry was a yearning to rise out of this savagery and brutality. If we use the word "chivalrous" even to-day we mean something courteous and delicately honourable, above the common level of civility and honesty. A good knight was bound to be that. He was bound to be gentle towards ladies, to be generous towards even his enemies, to be full of courtesy towards a fallen foe, and of reverence towards age and authority. Perhaps the truest description of the "ideal" of chivalry is that by Tennyson in the 'Idylls of the King,' which, though they are about King Arthur, who lived ages before chivalry was invented, give a perfect picture of what knighthood would have been had Arthur, as Tennyson paints him, been living in the middle ages. He says he drew the knights around him

"In that fair order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.
I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence the king, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their king.
To break the heathen, and uphold the Christ;
To ride abroad, redressing human wrongs;
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it;
To lead sweet lives, in purest chastity;
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds
Until they won her; for indeed I know
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid;
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words,
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

Of course this is only a beautiful picture (and very far was the lion-hearted Richard from being like it), but it gives us an idea of what they aimed at; and to have noble aims, even though we cannot reach them, makes life noble.

8. The knight, then, was to be brave, gallant, pure, faithful, loving, and courteous. A true knight also loved music, songs,

and poetry ; romantic songs, perhaps, in praise of his lady. If he could make and sing them himself it was all the better.

9. But there were some drawbacks to all this. Sometimes we find that the knight, in his high admiration of exalted virtue, generosity, and magnanimity, undervalued and forgot the less ornamental and more homely groundwork of steady honesty, justice, and humanity. Again, in Tennyson's description, among the beautiful things which were to be taught, "high thought," "amiable words," &c., was one rather questionable virtue—"love of fame." We must not stop to discuss the merits and demerits of this "last infirmity of noble minds ;" but, for good or for ill, it was a strong influence in the knightly mind. The knight loved to be famous ; to be seen, admired, and sung about was his great reward for his brave deeds.

10. After the Norman Conquest one great change had been introduced in the system of judgment. We all remember the trial by *ordeal*, which was the old way of appealing to God to declare the truth. The Normans had introduced another method, that of trial by battle. If two men disputed, if one brought a charge against another, and it was impossible to tell which spoke the truth, they would appeal to the wager of battle, that is, the two would fight, and it was believed that God would uphold the right, the innocent would conquer, and the guilty would be overthrown. We often read of this too in poems and tales ; indeed, the custom has barely died out yet, though it has long been contrary to the laws of England. As the chivalrous spirit grew, not only would people fight for grave reasons and to find out the truth, but would also fight for the pleasure and the vanity of it. This was how the custom of tournaments began, which were very terrible little battles really, but which were considered by the knights as delightful opportunities for showing off their courage and skill, their fine arms and fine horses. Though both knights and horses were often killed and badly wounded, grand ladies, beautifully dressed, would sit on raised seats all round looking on, one of whom would be chosen queen of beauty, to give the prizes to the conquerors.

11. But the great blot and fault of all in the "ideal" of chivalry was that it was limited to a class. The knight was not to be faithful and pitiful to *all*, but only to his own equals, and to his own immediate dependants and servants. He had no idea that he owed anything of all that courtesy and generosity to those who were below him, to the poor and humbly born. He was, we may say, a *gentleman* when he was dealing with gentlemen and

with ladies, but he was still as savage and cruel as ever when he had to do with townspeople, tradespeople, and peasants. We shall see more of this later on, because, though Richard I. was before all things a knight, he was not such a perfect type of one as a prince who lived 200 years afterwards, the Black Prince.

12. A great part of Richard's reign was taken up in fighting the third Crusade. A short time before the death of Henry II. the Saracens had conquered back Jerusalem from the Christians, and another Crusade had been proclaimed to win it back again. People had tried hard to persuade Henry to join it. He at first very prudently said that he thought it more his duty to stay at home and govern and protect his own subjects than to go and fight the Saracens, though afterwards he consented to go. However, those great family troubles which embittered his last years prevented his ever doing so, and when he died, and Richard became king, his first determination was to become a crusader.

**Richard a
crusader.**

13. It is possible that he partly meant to atone for his undutiful conduct towards his father, for which he felt some remorse; and partly, too, that he had a sort of romantic and religious feeling about the Holy Land. But he loved war and fighting everywhere; and no doubt one of his main motives was his great longing to earn honour and distinction.

14. His reign began in a very dreadful way, by a horrible massacre of the Jews. There was a strong feeling in the people of that time that it was a good and religious act to persecute the Jews. They looked on them as the nation who had killed Christ, and felt as if they were in some sort avenging Him if they slew or tortured a Jew; so strangely were religion and cruelty mixed up together. The very spirit of the Crusades was full of ferocity. The people were taught even by bishops and saints that killing unbelievers was a holy and praiseworthy act. St. Bernard says, "The Christian who slays the unbeliever in the Holy War is sure of his reward. . . . The Christian glories in the death of the pagan because Christ is glorified." There did not seem to people in those days much difference between a pagan, or a Turk, or a Jew. They thought it glorified Christ, the Prince of Peace, to kill either of them, and priests or monks often hounded the mob on to destroy the Jews. We must say, however, in justice to St. Bernard (who, perhaps, like many other saints, was better than his theories), that he tried to protect the Jews when the Christians in Germany rose against them. He said God had punished the

The Jews.

Jews by their dispersion ; it was not for man to punish them by murder.

15. The kings on the whole protected the Jews, not at all out of kindness or Christian charity, but because they could get more money out of them than out of anybody else. Being in general better educated than other men, and spending their lives in peaceful occupations, they gained and saved great wealth. In particular, they were the best physicians and the best merchants of the time, and "as rich as a Jew" was a true proverb even then. It was they who lent the money (getting a good interest for it) to build the grand castles and cathedrals about which we have heard so much. They are said to have been the first people in England who built stone houses for themselves, and set the example of it to others. For before they came into the country all the houses were built of wood, and towns and cities were continually being burnt down.

16. The Jews had been made to contribute very handsomely to the Crusade now about to start, no doubt much against their will ; and the kings, whenever milder means failed, had recourse to torture and imprisonment for extorting money from them. But before each Crusade there had been a massacre of the Jews, and so there was now. First in London, on the day of Richard's coronation ; then a still worse one in York, where the Jews were besieged in the castle, and, knowing the horrors that would befall them if they fell into the hands of their enemies, they chose rather to kill themselves, their wives and children, and to burn up all their treasures.

17. It does not appear that Richard himself was guilty of these massacres ; he even punished, though not half severely enough, some of the murderers. Having got all the money he could collect together, Richard started on the Crusade, where he was very brave, and gained great fame, but was also so overbearing and quarrelsome that very little was achieved. Jerusalem could not be won back from the Saracens, and Richard was so

1192. bitterly grieved at this disappointment, that when he was led up a hill from which the Holy City could be seen he refused to look at it, saying he was unworthy. But as this is not part of the history of England we must not concern ourselves with his adventures in the Holy Land. Things went on fairly quietly in England, and though the people were heavily taxed, they were perhaps none the worse off for their warlike king and his followers being so far away. Prince John, to whom his brother had shown much kindness, but who was treacherous by

nature, endeavoured to rebel, but was kept in some kind of restraint by his mother, who helped to govern while Richard was absent.

18. As the king was returning home from the Crusade he was separated by a storm at sea from most of his followers, and at length found himself attended by only one man and a boy as he was attempting to reach his dominions by land. In this strait he fell into the hands

**Richard a
prisoner.**

of the Duke of Austria, who was one of the princes whom he had affronted and quarrelled with during the Crusade, and who soon made him over as a captive to the Emperor of Germany. For a time no one knew what had become of him, and there is a pretty story told of how his friend and minstrel, Blondel, wandered about seeking his master, singing a favourite air which the two had often sung together in happier days, for Richard was a musician and a poet, as a good knight should be. At last, after singing it in vain under many gloomy castle walls, he heard it taken up by a voice he knew from within a fortress, and thus he found his master. This tale, unfortunately, is not told by any one living at the time, and therefore we cannot feel much confidence in its being true; but it was certainly known ere long to Richard's people that he was a prisoner in the power of the Emperor of Germany.

19. Though Richard had done so little for the English, except take their money, still they were proud of him. His courage made both him and his kingdom famous, and they were much troubled at his captivity. Two people, however, were very glad of it; these were his own brother John, and his former dear friend the King of France. John had given out that his brother was dead during the many months in which he had not been heard of, and was very anxious to be made king himself. The French king, whom Richard had insulted in Palestine, and who had his eye upon Normandy, was also desirous of keeping him out of the way. He accused him of many crimes which he had never committed; while John, on his part, offered to pay the emperor £20,000 a month if he would keep his brother in prison. But it was all in vain; Richard cleared himself from the accusations of the King of France, and the emperor, after demanding and receiving a

**1194.
His
release.**

very heavy ransom, set him at liberty.

20. After his release Richard came to England for the second time, where he was crowned again with great ceremony, to wipe out the stain of his imprisonment, and soon after left England for ever. He readily forgave John; indeed, he never showed

a vindictive spirit, though he was so proud and fiery. The rest of his life was principally spent in wars with France.

21. His death showed the same mingling of cruelty and generosity which his life had done. He was besieging the castle

1199.

His death.

of one of his own vassals who had displeased him, when, almost in the hour of victory, he received a mortal wound from a soldier on the ramparts. After the final assault, and when the castle was taken, the king gave the savage order that every one of the men who had defended it should be put to death, only excepting the archer whose arrow had pierced him. This man was brought before him, and spoke out boldly and fearlessly, telling Richard that his father and his two brothers had been slain by him, and that now, having taken his revenge, he was ready and willing to bear any punishment the conqueror might inflict. Richard's brave heart could admire the bravery of another, even of his enemy. He freely forgave the man, ordering his attendants to reward him and send him away in safety. Thus, with his last thought one of pity and pardon, died the Lion-hearted king.

22. Richard, leaving no children, was succeeded by his brother John, who was already known as having rebelled against his indulgent father and betrayed his confiding brother.

John.

He afterwards showed himself one of the worst men and kings of whom any history speaks. All the good we can find about him will go into a very few words. He is said by some

His good deeds.

to have been clever and handsome, and to have had agreeable manners, though another account is that "he was stupid, fat, and sour-looking." He was, however, beyond doubt, a good general and soldier. And one of the men who wrote at the time, after telling of his death and his wickedness, and trying to find a good word for him, says that he founded a monastery at Beaulieu, and, when dying, gave to the monastery of Croxton lands worth ten pounds. His evil deeds will take up more space.

23. Scarcely had he become king, his character being already so unfavourably known, when he put himself farther in the wrong

His evil deeds.

by a crime which roused everybody's hatred and indignation, and marked him out clearly for the cruel, wicked, pitiless wretch he was.

24. He was the only son of Henry II. now living, and he was made King of England without any difficulty. Though the law of the succession to the crown was not yet clearly settled as it is now, yet the descent from the eldest son of a king had now

begun to be thought more of than it used to be, especially on the Continent. John's eldest brother had no children; but the second, Geoffrey, had left a young son, Arthur.

Though he was still a child, it was thought on the Continent that, as Geoffrey was older than John, his son ought now to be King of England, Duke of Normandy, and, in short, the heir of his grandfather Henry II. So it certainly would be now, but as yet these things were hardly settled.

25. At one time, indeed, during Richard's life there had been a plan for making Arthur his heir; and now his mother, Constance of Brittany, stirred up all the friends she could for him. A strong party took up his cause, with the French king at their head, and there was some disputing and fighting in France. At last John, who could fight well and was a skilful general, gained a victory, and made his young nephew prisoner.

26. The rest of that poor young prince's story, as it was either known or guessed at, is told in Shakespeare's play of *King John*. In that play are some of the most pathetic words which even Shakespeare ever wrote—the lament of his mother Constance over her boy—

“Never, never
Shall I behold my pretty Arthur more.”

She never did. Shakespeare tells how his keeper Hubert was ordered to burn out the Prince Arthur's eyes; and how his uncle darkly hinted, though hardly daring to speak the words, that he should put him to death. Such dreadful deeds are, of course, done in darkness, and no one ever quite knew the exact truth about Arthur's death. The historian, a monk of St. Alban's abbey, who lived at this time, and wrote a very long and interesting account of this most interesting reign, says that John sent him close prisoner to Rouen, “but shortly afterwards the said Arthur suddenly disappeared.” If a prince *suddenly disappeared* at such a time, and in such circumstances, it opened a door to grave suspicions; and, accordingly, it was universally believed that John slew him with his own hand; “for which reason,” says the same historian, the monk Roger, “many turned their affections from the king, and entertained the deepest enmity against him.”

27. This horrible crime (for if he did not murder the boy with his own hands, which perhaps he did, there is no reasonable doubt that he did it by the hands of others) was the beginning of John's misfortunes. It not only turned men's hearts against him, but King Philip of France seized on it as a pretext for

taking possession of Normandy and a great part of John's other French dominions. It must be remembered that though, as King of England, he was independent of France or any other over-lord, yet he held Normandy and his other French provinces as vassal of the King of France.

28. Philip accordingly summoned John to appear before him and the great lords of France to answer for the crime of which he was accused. John would not come; upon which Philip declared that he had forfeited his duchy, and marched into Normandy with an army. If John had been a different man, if his nobles, French and English, had loved or respected him, things would have turned out very differently. If it had been

William the Conqueror, or Henry I., or Henry II., they would never have let Normandy go, we may be sure. But John was already so hated and despised that Philip gained Normandy and most of his other

French possessions with hardly any trouble.

29. So, after being united for about 150 years, England and Normandy were separated again. Of all the French possessions of the Conqueror, there only remained to England the Channel Islands, which had belonged to Normandy, where the poorer people still talk an old-fashioned French, and are governed by something like the old Norman laws, and who still boast "that they rather conquered England than England conquered them."

30. But though this was a great loss to King John, and he acquired the ignominious surname of "Sans-terre," or "Lackland," it was in the end all the better for England. As long as the King of England was also lord of a great part of France, he was more a foreigner than an Englishman, and the English often had to pay money and to fight in quarrels with which they had nothing to do. Some of the great lords, it appears, still had lands both in Normandy and England, as they had soon after the Conquest; but they now lost them and became entirely English, unless they chose to give up their English estates and settle in France as Frenchmen. The provinces in the south of France, which had belonged to Henry II.'s wife Eleanor, were looked on now as a distant dependency of England, instead of England being only a dependency or province of the great French dominions of the king. From this time forward England was England, with an English king, lords, and people.

31. Just at this time, too, the English language broke silence again. The Anglo-Saxon 'Chronicle,' as we saw, came to an end

in 1154, and for the next fifty years any one who had anything to write wrote it in Latin. But now an English clergyman wrote, or, rather, translated a book into English. It was a history of England; much more amusing, I am afraid, than this one is, but not half so true. It contained many strange and some beautiful stories, among others that of King Lear and his daughters; and also curious and romantic histories of King Arthur and his knights, and the wizard Merlin. These tales were so popular at that time that the unfortunate young Prince of Brittany had been named after King Arthur.

1205.
Layamon.

LECTURE XXI.—MAGNA CHARTA.

The dispute with the Pope. Stephen Langton. John becomes the Pope's vassal. The archbishop and the barons demand the charter. The changes it introduced. John breaks the charter. The French invasion. Death of John.

1. We have seen that the loss of John's great provinces in France might be looked on as a "blessing in disguise." His wickedness also worked for good in another way. For a long time past the great barons and nobles had been tyrants and oppressors, and the king and the people had, more or less, made common cause against them. In this way the kings had grown to be very strong and powerful; and, had it gone too far, would have been likely to become despots themselves, whom nobody could resist. If the king had been tolerably good, he would have gone on becoming more and more powerful, as he did in France, and some other countries. But John was so intolerably bad that neither the nobles nor the people could put up with him. So before the royal power had become too firmly established all his subjects rose against him, and fixed once and for ever the bulwark of English liberty.

2. Soon after losing Normandy John got into a great quarrel with the Pope, who was now named Innocent III., and in the first instance there is no doubt that he was in the right. The quarrel was about electing an archbishop of Canterbury. There were two candidates for the office, one approved by the king, and the other not. Both of them claimed to have been elected by the monks of Canterbury. In this difficulty they both went off to Rome, that the Pope might decide between them. But they were greatly surprised when they got there to find that the Pope refused to have either of them made archbishop, and commanded the monks to elect another man of his appointing.

3. Now this was a quite unheard-of thing, for the Pope to appoint an English archbishop, and when John heard it he was naturally most indignant, and made a very spirited answer. He

declared he wondered at the Pope's audacity, and he would stand up for the rights of his crown to the death, and "as there were plenty of archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the Church, as well in England as in his other territories, who were well-stored in all kinds of learning, if he wanted them, he would not beg for justice or judgment from strangers out of his own dominions,"— words which, as Fuller says, well "deserved memory, had they been as vigorously acted as valiantly spoken."

Here, again, we shall see good come out of evil. Though it is quite certain the Pope had no right whatever to appoint the Archbishop of Canterbury, yet he chose a very good man for the post. His name was Stephen Langton, a name which ought to be had in honour as long as England lasts. However, for the time, King John forbade his entering the country.

**Stephen
Langton.**

4. The Pope was not going to be baffled. He had a power for punishing kingdoms which fell under his displeasure almost as terrible as was the power of excommunication against individuals. This was what is called the interdict (or "forbidding"). A pope's interdict meant that all religious services were forbidden in the country. The churches were shut up; no sacraments were performed, except baptizing infants and giving the last office to the dying. Marriages were only celebrated in the churchyard or in the porch, instead of inside the church; and the dead were buried in roads and ditches, without any prayers or any clergyman's presence.

**1208.
The inter-
dict.**

"See now," says Fuller, "on a sudden the sad face of the English Church—a face without a tongue; no singing of service, no reading of prayers. None need pity the living . . . when he looks on the dead, who were buried in ditches like dogs, without any prayers said upon them. True, a well-informed Christian knows full well that a corpse, though cast in a bog, shall not stick there at the day of judgment; thrown into a wood, shall then find the way out; buried by the highway side, is in the ready road to resurrection; . . . yet, seeing that these people believed that a grave in consecrated ground was a good step to heaven, and were taught that prayers after death were essential to their salvation, it must needs put strange fears into the heads and hearts, both of such which deceased, and their friends which survived them."

5. Thus we see what terrible misery this interdict would cause. It would seem very hard even to us now were all churches and chapels shut up, where we are used to go for

prayer and praise, comfort and instruction ; but it was far harder then, when people had no Bibles or other books at home, and when they attached far more importance to Church rites and the officiating priest than we do. And "what equity was it that so many thousands in England, who in this particular case might better answer to the name of 'Innocent' than his Holiness himself, should be involved in this punishment?"

6. The people of England were thus in a very sad condition, punished by the Pope for no offence on their part, and tyrannized over more and more by the cruel king. Roger, the monk of St. Alban's (who is generally called Roger of Wendover), tells us that there were at this time

**John's
tyranny.**

in the kingdom of England many nobles whose wives and daughters the king had shamefully insulted, "to the great indignation of their husbands and fathers ; others whom he had, by unjust exactions, reduced to the extreme of poverty ; some whose parents and relations he had banished, converting their inheritances to his own uses ; thus the said king's enemies were as numerous as his nobles."

7. He gives many examples of John's horrid cruelty. He was offended at a certain archdeacon, named Geoffrey, for something he had said ; so he had him seized, chained, and thrown into prison, where he was half-starved ; and as if that were not enough, "after he had been there a few days, by command of the said king, a cap of lead was put on him, and at length, being overcome by want of food, as well as by the weight of the leaden cap, he departed to the Lord."

8. At one time, being afraid his nobles were going to rebel, he demanded hostages of them ; that is, he required them to give him their sons or nephews as pledges of their faithfulness. Amongst others, John's messengers came to a certain nobleman named William de Braose, to ask for his son to be delivered into the care of the king. But "Matilda, wife of the said William, with the sauciness of a woman, took the reply out of his mouth, and said to the messengers in reply, 'I will not deliver up my son to your lord, King John, because he basely murdered his nephew Arthur, whom he ought to have taken care of honourably.'" We may imagine how enraged the king was when he heard this speech ; he immediately sent knights and soldiers to seize on the whole family. Though they escaped for that time, he got possession of the poor lady afterwards with her son, and, to punish her for her "saucy" speech, starved them both to death !

9. This is how he treated clergymen and women. We will now read one specimen of how he dealt with the Jews, and then we will leave this miserable part of the subject. "All the Jews throughout England, of both sexes, were seized, imprisoned, and tortured severely, in order to do the king's will with their money. . . . Some of them gave up all they had, and promised more, that they might thus escape. One of them, at Bristol, even after being dreadfully tortured, refused to ransom himself; on which the king ordered his agents to knock out one of his cheek-teeth daily, until he paid 10,000 marks of silver. After they had for seven days knocked out a tooth each day, with great agony to the Jew, and had begun the same operation on the eighth day, the said Jew, reluctant as he was to provide the money required, gave the said sum to save his eighth tooth, though he had already lost seven."

10. But we are now coming to his great disgrace and humiliation. He had not taken much notice of the interdict, and still refused to allow Stephen Langton to enter the kingdom. So now the Pope, who had just excommunicated the Emperor of Germany, and, as Fuller says, "had his hand in," proceeded to excommunicate John by name. John even now took no notice, but went on as before. And he led armies into Wales and Ireland, and was very successful in his fights, for he was, as we know, a good soldier. But meanwhile he made his own nobles and people hate him worse and worse, and especially the clergy and the Church, for he tried to punish them in every way for the Pope's offences.

11. Pope Innocent, having tried the interdict and the excommunication in vain, now went a step farther, and deposed King John—declared that he should no longer be King of England, but that the Pope would choose another in his stead. This was what things had come to by this time. It was enough to make William the Conqueror turn in his grave that the Pope should be taking upon him to put down kings and set up kings in England. But John was frightened now, and cowed. And well he might be, for the nobles, "well pleased that they were absolved from their allegiance to John," began to make friends with his enemy the King of France; and he made preparations to invade England, and seize on that as he had already done on Normandy.

12. There would have been no fear that the King of France could have conquered England, if the English had loved their king. For England was very strong now, had a great fleet, and

1213.

The Pope
deposes him.

fine soldiers. "Had they been of one heart, and of one disposition towards their king," says Roger, "there was not a prince under heaven against whom they could not have defended the kingdom of England." But they were not all of one mind towards their king, or, rather, that one mind was of hatred and detestation of him. John knew this very well, and was frightened. Another thing which frightened him was that a hermit, named Peter, had foretold not long ago that by next Ascension Day John would no longer be a king, but the crown of England would be transferred to another. John had heard of this prophecy, and had put Peter in prison for it; but he was at heart greatly alarmed. And the prophecy was spread abroad everywhere, and everybody believed it.

13. Accordingly, in this great strait all John's boldness melted away. Instead of promising his lords and his people that he

**His
submission.**

would reform and govern them justly and mercifully, and rallying them round him to defend their country, he humbled himself to ask mercy of the Pope, and to beg for his pardon and help. He not only submitted to him about the appointing of the archbishop, and gave free leave for Stephen Langton to come to Canterbury, but he humbled himself far lower than that. He made over the whole free kingdom of

**He does
homage for
his crown.**

England to the Pope of Rome, and did homage to him as his vassal. England, that had always been free, and never had any over-lord higher than her own king, was now to be under the Italian bishop, and her king to be his man!

14. They even say that John took off his royal crown and laid it at the feet of the Pope's legate. Roger of Wendover says that this disgrace and shame happened on Ascension Day. But when that day passed, and John was still alive and well, the poor prophet was brought out of prison, tied to a horse's tail, dragged through the streets, and afterwards hung. His son, who had done nothing at all that we know of, was hung too. But people whispered among themselves that Peter ought not to have been hung, for his prophecy had come true indeed.

15. So now, as Innocent had fully triumphed, John was solemnly absolved, and the Pope forbade the French king to invade England after all. The French king was much enraged at this, for he had made great preparations, and was all ready with his army to come and conquer England. However, having another enemy ready to his hand in Flanders, he turned against him for the time, and England was left alone.

16. But though the Pope was now satisfied, and took John's part, we are not to imagine that the English lords were so easily pacified; and now they had got a splendid leader and adviser on their side. This was the very archbishop whom the Pope had forced upon England. **Arrival of Archbishop Stephen.** Innocent must have been greatly surprised at the turn affairs took. He, as we saw, had been quite content with John's submission and obedience, and with a promise John had made to restore the money of the Church. We do not hear one word said of his admonishing John to rule his subjects better, to leave off injustice and cruelty, and to protect the poor, the orphan, or the stranger. No, not a word of all this; only the rights or wrongs of the Church, and plenty of money.

17. When Stephen Langton came to England, on the other hand, one of the very first things he did was to think of the people. Before John could get absolution from him, he was made to promise that "he would renew all the good laws of his ancestors, especially those of King Edward; would annul bad ones, would judge his subjects justly, and would restore his rights to each and all."

18. John promised; but of course he did not mean to keep his promise. On the contrary, he immediately collected a great army to fight against his refractory barons. The archbishop boldly told him that he had no right to make war, and almost compelled him to give up his purpose. Directly after this a great council was held at St. Paul's in London, consisting of the bishops, barons, and others, and the archbishop at its head. The principal public business transacted was, that the archbishop gave leave to the clergymen who had had no Church services for so long to begin again to open their churches, and to sing the services, "though in a low voice." But privately he called some of the nobles to him, and said, "Did you hear how, when I **Stephen and the barons.** absolved the king at Winchester, I made him swear that he would do away with unjust laws, and would recall good laws, such as those of King Edward?" Then he went on to tell them that he had found a most precious thing—the very charter of liberty, which we heard of so long ago, which was given by Henry I. (see p. 163), but which seemed to have been lost and forgotten; and by help of that he said they might win back their long lost freedom.

19. In this great fight between tyranny and liberty it is important to notice one thing. It is, that Stephen Langton and the barons were not fighting for anything new or trying to do away

with anything old. England had always been a free country. Our forefathers, from the very oldest days we ever hear of them, when they were still living in Germany and Denmark, were noted for their love of liberty, and their kings had never been allowed to be tyrants. They had had their councils of wise men, and their great assemblies, where every freeman had a voice. Some of all this had got buried over and forgotten in the course of ages; but now Englishmen, under this intolerable tyrant, began to "remember from whence they had fallen," and to resolve they would bring their old rights to life again. They would have back the good old laws of Henry I. and Edward the Confessor. Those good old laws were founded on the older laws of Cnut, of Edgar the Peaceable, of Alfred. It shows, too, how the nobles by this time had become completely English, and must have half forgotten that they had had French great-grandfathers, that they wanted the laws of Edward the Confessor, who was the last king of the old English royal family.

20. Archbishop Stephen then showed the barons the charter of Henry I., and caused it to be read aloud to them. When the barons heard it they were delighted; they all swore that they would stand up for their rights, and, if necessary, would die for them; the archbishop faithfully promising them his help and support. This was the beginning of the great struggle which ended in Magna Charta, the great charter of which every Englishman is so proud, and on which all our liberties are built.

21. The year after the assembly at St. Paul's the barons assembled again; this time it was at the shrine of St. Edmund, the English saint, whom the Danes had killed. In his church they swore on the great altar that if the king refused them these liberties and laws they would withdraw from their allegiance, and make war on him.

22. When Christmas came, and John was in London, the nobles came up to him "in gay, military array," and reminding him of what he had promised when he was absolved, demanded that he would now confirm those promises. The king was greatly frightened, but got leave to wait till Easter, probably hoping that he might find some way out of it by that time. But when Easter arrived things looked rather worse for the king than better; the barons had made use of the interval in inducing almost all the nobility of the whole nation to join them; and now they assembled in a very large army, with knights, horse-soldiers, and foot-soldiers, all well equipped. Besides the nobles, there were also

on the same side the citizens of London, with their Lord Mayor at their head.

The king had hardly anybody left on his side; he could barely muster seven knights. So what was he to do? He did just what that sort of man was likely to do—he “concealed his secret hatred under a calm countenance, and deceitfully promised” to do as they wished.

23. The barons appointed to meet the king in the meadow of Runnymede, near Windsor—the most famous meadow in all England. There John signed the Great Charter—the very charter which, torn, shrivelled, and yellow with age, we may still see in the British Museum. And when we do so, ought we not to give a grateful thought to Stephen Langton and the brave men who won it for us?

1215.
The Great
Charter.

24. Before we consider what the charter was about, we will see how John behaved when he had signed it. Roger of Wendover tells us that he signed it without making any objection, and every one “exulted in the belief that God had compassionately touched the king’s heart; had taken away his heart of stone, and given him one of flesh;” and they hoped that “he was happily inclined to all gentleness and peace. But far otherwise was it—oh shame! oh sorrow!—and far differently from what was expected did events happen.” The same old historian tells us that some of the few people about the king “said gruntingly, and with much laughter and derision, ‘that he was no longer a king, but a slave and the scum of the people.’” Upon which he fell into a rage, something like his father, gnashed his teeth, scowled with his eyes, and, seizing sticks and limbs of trees, began to gnaw them with his teeth. After which he immediately began to take measures for breaking all his promises.

25. When we read what those promises were we see something of the state of things from which the Great Charter rescued England. The kings in those times had powers which were not only very oppressive, but very vexatious, because they could interfere in everything, and were not above taking bribes of all sorts. Thus one man had to pay twenty marks for leave to salt fishes; others had to pay 100 shillings for leave to buy and sell dyed cloth. If a man wanted the king to do him justice, to pay him a debt, for instance, he would have to offer a present; sometimes it would be a share of the money, but sometimes it would be things we should have supposed a king would be too proud to accept; it might be

The king’s
power.

two or three horses, or hawks ; two handsome green dresses, or three Flemish caps ; 200 hens, or 300 fishes.

26. The king's authority was as heavy on the great lords as on the common people. For example, if a baron died the king took possession of his estates, and would not let the son and heir succeed his father without paying a large sum of money ; and this was not a sum fixed by law, but the king claimed just what he liked. If the son and heir was still a child, then the king kept all the profits to himself till the boy came of age, and only gave out just as much as he thought fit for bringing him up. As to the widow, she often had a great deal of trouble to get her proper dowry ; and if the king chose, he could make her marry again, whether she would or no ; and marry whoever *he* liked, not whoever *she* liked. A good and just king might have acted so as not to make all this intolerable ; he might have done his duty by the fatherless and the widow ; but when there came to be a wicked king like John he was sure to abuse the power. So in Magna Charta he was made to give up all these rights.

27. Again, if people had done anything wrong they were very often punished by fines ; that was no doubt preferable to having their hands or feet cut off ; but the grievance was that the fines were not fixed sums ; the king could demand just what he liked ; and he did, of course, when he wanted money, demand very large sums for very small offences. Sometimes people must have been utterly ruined ; they were made to give up all they had. A poor countryman might have to give up his very carts and farming-stock with which he earned his living. In Magna Charta John had to promise that a man should only be fined according to his offence, and also according to his property, and that he should never have his means of living taken away from him. And he had to give up the power of fixing on what sum it would be fair to demand, and leave it to be decided by lawful and tried men, the man's own neighbours and equals (something like our trial by jury).

28. Not only could the king levy fines, he could also lay on taxes pretty much as he pleased, whether the country liked it or not. Now he had to promise he would not do that without the consent of his council. The council was much the same as the old witan, and something like our parliament, but not exactly, as we shall see farther on.

29. Another great hardship was, that when the king travelled

about his servants and officers used to seize on people's horses and carts to carry his goods without paying for them; and they would also take corn and other things, if they wanted them, in the same way. We saw how badly Henry I.'s servants used to treat the people in this respect, until he put a stop to it. Now John had to promise he would not allow his people to do this any more, or to take anything without paying for it. (At that time the hire of a cart with two horses was tenpence a day, and one with three horses was fourteen pence.)

30. Many other evil things were abolished and good things promised in Magna Charta. There were some curious additions made to it afterwards about the woods and forests, which show how tyrannical the forest laws must have been before. If a man's pigs wandered into the king's forest for one night it was not to be made a pretext for depriving him of his property. No one was to be killed for hunting the king's deer, but to pay a fine, or go to prison for a year and a day. And a man might keep all the honey found in his own woods.

31. But the most important point in the whole charter was this—that no freeman should be imprisoned or punished in any way except by lawful judgment of his peers or equals; not by the arbitrary will of the king or of anybody else, but by the law of the land. And the king had to promise too, "To none will we sell, to none will we delay or deny justice." We may well imagine the misery and indignation it would cause when justice was sold; when the rich man who could bribe the judge or the king got his own way, right or wrong, and the poor man who had nothing to give was not listened to. All our best kings, as we have seen, had tried to put a stop to this. The worth of the Charter is that it compelled a bad king to do the same, so that the country was no longer to be at the mercy of chance,—to depend on whether there happened to be a good or a bad man on the throne,—as it is where a monarchy is absolute.

32. All the same powers, or almost all, which the king had over his barons, the barons had over their vassals, and they could oppress them just as much or even more than the king could oppress themselves, because the under vassals had less power to resist. Many of the poorer tenants, instead of paying rent, had to do work

Purveyance.

Forests.

Unjust imprisonment.

The barons and their vassals.

for their lords; for instance, to take their horses and waggons and reap his corn and carry it home, when their own wanted reaping and carrying. He could tax them and fine them much as he liked, and he also had courts of justice (or injustice) of his own. It shows that in framing the charter these lords, with Stephen Langton at their head, were not thinking only of themselves, or their own class, but cared for the good of all the people in the land, that they all promised to do for their own vassals just the same as they made the king promise to do for them.

33. Everybody knew that John was not to be trusted to keep his word, and that he was sure to break all these promises

**The
twenty-five
lords.**

directly he could. So twenty-five lords were appointed to look after him, and compel him to keep them if possible; one of these twenty-five was the Lord Mayor of London. After the king had signed the Charter he was made to sign an agreement about these lords, which, it must be owned, reads very oddly. For he has to say that if he breaks any of the articles or does any wrong to anybody, "those barons, with the whole community of the country, shall annoy and harass us by all the means in their power, such as taking our castles, lands, and possessions, and any other means, till we give them satisfaction. And, the better to harass us, the four castellans of Northampton, Kenilworth, Nottingham, and Scarborough shall swear to the twenty-five barons that they will do with the said castles whatever they may command or enjoin them to do," &c. We can hardly wonder at John gnawing the sticks after having to sign this.

34. The charter was now published all over the kingdom; it was read in the churches for everybody to hear, that they might

**John's
plans of
revenge.**

all know what the king had promised, and help to "annoy and harass" him if he broke his word. The king, after his outburst of fury, and passing a sleepless night, went off to the Isle of Wight "in great agony of mind, devising plans to be revenged on the barons." The first plan he devised was to send off to his master, the Pope, to get him to take his part against his people. The next was, wishing, as Roger says, "to seek revenge on his enemies with two swords, the spiritual and temporal," to hire foreign soldiers from abroad to come and fight for him. Both these plans seemed to answer at first.

35. The Pope, who, as we saw, only cared for his own power, and not at all for the good of the people, took upon him

to "annul and quash" the Charter, and forbid anybody to pay attention to it. But the English nobles were not going to be cowed by the Pope; they went on "harassing" the king more severely than ever. After this the Pope said the barons were worse than the very Saracens, and excommunicated them. He also punished his own archbishop, Stephen Langton, by suspending him. By and bye he excommunicated the barons over again, and laid the city of London under an interdict. Even this did not frighten the barons. The Pope had stretched his power too far. People began to get used to his threatenings and to defy them. For when these sentences were made known, "the city of London treated them with contempt, inasmuch as the barons determined not to observe them;" and even the priests would not publish them. Men began to think, and to say too, that the management of lay or temporal affairs did not pertain to the Pope, but only the control and management of Church matters; "they therefore paid no regard at all to the sentence of interdict or excommunication, but held worship throughout the whole city, ringing bells and chanting with loud voices."

The Pope
annuls the
charter.

We seem to see that England will be a Protestant country by and bye, now it had come to this.

36. Meanwhile, John's other plan of bringing in the foreign soldiers was working too. And that also, we may say, worked a little too well. For while the king by their help seemed to get the better of the barons, and took possession of several strong castles, these hired soldiers were so utterly and outrageously wicked that they only strengthened the general hatred against John. They went ravaging about the country, till we could almost fancy we had got back to the awful times of Stephen and Matilda. "The whole surface of the earth," writes Roger, "was covered with these limbs of the devil, like locusts, who assembled from remote regions to blot out everything from the face of the earth—from man down to his cattle; for, running about with drawn swords and open knives, they ransacked towns, houses, cemeteries, and churches; robbing every one, and sparing neither women nor children. Even the priests, while standing at the very altars with the cross of the Lord in their hands, clad in their sacred robes, were seized, tortured, robbed, and ill-treated; and there was no pontiff, priest, or Levite to pour oil or wine on their wounds." There is a great deal more about the wickedness of these men which is almost too shocking to quote.

Foreign
soldiers.

37. What was to be done with a king like this? so faithless and so cruel—such an enemy to his own kingdom. The barons consulted together, and did a thing which seems **The barons** very unworthy of them. They determined to get **invite the** rid of John altogether (in that, no doubt, they were **French** quite right); but they determined also to offer the **Prince.** crown of England to the son of the King of France. Naturally the French king and his son were only too pleased. They had already gained John's French dominions, but England would be far better still. Louis, the French king's eldest son, had married John's niece, which was supposed to give him some sort of claim to the throne, and he now came over to England with a great company of earls, barons, and knights, all eager to get a share of the rich and beautiful island; and, doubtless, hoping to settle down as the Normans had done 150 years before. But this was not to be; England was never going to be conquered or joined to France again. The English lords began to repent of their rash act when they found out how the Frenchmen behaved. They soon began plundering and pillaging, and bringing their rich booty to London; and the Prince Louis, passing over the English lords who were on his side, gave lands and castles to his Frenchmen. It was even said that as soon as he had subdued England and been crowned king he would banish the English barons from the country. The barons were therefore in great perplexity, when a most fortunate event occurred, namely, the death of John.

38. He was marching along the coast from Norfolk into Lincolnshire, at a place where two small rivers run into the sea.

1216.
Death of
John.

At low water this part of the sea is nearly dry; but the difficulty is, after crossing the mouth of one river, to be in time to cross the other before the tide rises. In trying to pass this dangerous place an immense part of John's baggage and treasure was lost: men, horses, carts, and costly things of all sorts, including his royal crown. For in those days it was the custom when great people travelled about to take all their goods with them. The loss of all these valuables so preyed upon John's mind that he fell into a fever. Nobody ever knew whether it was from poison or from eating too many peaches and drinking new cider when he was already ill; but from one cause or other he died in that abbey of Croxton, to which he gave the land worth £10.

39. Perhaps no one ever quitted the world whose death was such a blessing. John left a young son of about nine years old.

Till this time there had never been a king of England who was a child ; a king's young sons, as we have often seen, had been passed over, and a grown man, perhaps the last king's brother, had been made king. This is the best excuse we can make for the barons' invitation to the French prince ; it perhaps never occurred to them to make the little boy king ; and there was no one else left of the royal family. John was the last son of Henry II., and none of the others had left any descendants, except the poor Arthur, who had been killed. Happily John died before it was too late. Louis had already made the English nobles hate him, and accordingly they thought it better to have a child for their king than the Frenchman.

LECTURE XXII.—HENRY III. RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

Gothic architecture and Westminster Abbey. Extortions of the Pope. The Grey Friars and the Black Friars. The universities. Roger Bacon.

1. HENRY III. was solemnly crowned at Gloucester by the Bishop of Winchester. Stephen Langton had been suspended by the Pope, and was out of the country; it was not till after Pope Innocent died that he was allowed to return; but when he came back he, as Archbishop of Canterbury, crowned the young king over again, and took a great share in the government.

1216.
Henry III. 2. At the coronation Henry swore, as the kings usually did, that he would honour the Church, show strict justice to the people, abolish bad laws, and make good ones. Though he had as yet no power to keep or break these promises, being but nine years old, he had a very good guardian, William Marischal, Earl of Pembroke, who did all that could be done for the good of the nation. Of course one of the first things was to drive away the French. This was done without much trouble. Almost all the barons forsook Prince Louis, who treated them with such contempt, and returned to their allegiance to the young king. There were two fights, one on land and one at sea; the English conquered both times, and Louis was obliged to ask for peace. The English, "who," says Roger, "desired beyond measure to be rid of him," soon made terms with him, and he on his part seems to have been thankful to get away. "Each and all gave one another the kiss of peace, many of them deceitfully. . . Louis was conducted with all speed to the sea-coast, and thence, in lasting ignominy, escaped to France." And this is what Shakespeare has to say about it :—

"This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself."

Now these her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them ; nought shall make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true."

3. Henry III. had a long reign of fifty-six years. It was not a very peaceable one, though he grew up to be a harmless, well-meaning man, very different from his father. But he was not at all suited for those disturbed times, and by his dulness as well as his weak amiability he got into great disputes with his people. For the mere signing of Magna Charta by John was not enough in itself to settle the liberty of England ; it took a great many more years of struggling before all those good resolutions could be kept and obeyed. We see how thoroughly right has conquered at last. All the abuses, the bribery, the tyranny, the injustice of all sorts which had prevailed before Magna Charta sound to us outrageous and even absurd. They have been so trodden down and abolished that we now look on them as a mere story of the past ; but our forefathers had to battle for many long years to get them trodden down and abolished.

4. Henry III. had a great reverence for Edward the Confessor, and rather reminds us of him in several ways. He was religious, like him ; he was gentle and refined ; he liked music and poetry ; his private life was very good, but he was not wise or strong. And, like Edward, he Henry's character.
dearly loved foreigners, bringing them over in crowds, and making them bishops and lords in England. The English of his day liked this no better than Earl Godwine and the English of those days had done.

5. Moreover, he offended the people in one way which Edward the Confessor never did—by his taxes and greed for money. Edward, as we remember, had seen a little devil dancing on his money-bags, and had abolished the oppressive taxes. Henry had not the eyes to see the same, and he went on coveting and extorting his subjects' money, till they had to rebel against him at last.

6. Some of the earliest acts of his reign were religious ones. He was much under the guidance of Archbishop Stephen, and very likely his great reverence for Edward the Confessor was partly learnt from him, for we know how he and the barons had wished for his laws back again. Probably they often talked to the young king about him, and when Henry grew to be a man he named his sons by the old English names of Edward and

Edmund, names which had gone out of fashion after the Norman Conquest.

7. Another way he had of honouring Edward the Confessor we must feel to have been a very strange one. It was by pulling down his last beloved work, the old Westminster Abbey. Remarkable as it sounds, it was really meant in that sense. Just at this time a new style of architecture had come into existence, perhaps the most beautiful of any that has ever been invented by man, which we call Gothic. The old Saxon or Norman architecture, with its thick, massive pillars and round, richly-decorated arches, was grand, solemn, and beautiful; but the new Gothic, which had taller and more slender pillars and pointed arches, was also grand and solemn and still more beautiful. The Westminster Abbey which Henry III. built is the same we see and love so much now, the "loveliest thing in Christendom." When we look at it, when we walk along its stately aisles and look up to its lofty and shadowy roof, we feel that there were other thoughts in the hearts of the people of the middle ages besides the fighting and disputing which history books are full of—thoughts which they did not know how to put into words, but which breathe and live for us still in the unperishing stone. Lovely and sacred as we feel Westminster Abbey to be, we cannot help being grieved that Edward's old church, which had been thought so grand and wonderful in its day, and which, no doubt, was full of beauty and interest, was swept away. But those who destroyed it at least knew in the fulness of their hearts and their enthusiasm that they could do something better still, and would make a still worthier abode for the shrine of Edward the Confessor.

8. Soon after the first stone of the Lady Chapel of Westminster Abbey was laid, the young king, who was now about thirteen years old, was taken to Canterbury, to a grand service in honour of Thomas à Becket. About fifty years before a great fire had burned down the finest part of Canterbury Cathedral. We should think that a terrible misfortune now, but we might not feel it quite so much as the people did then. It gives us another glimpse of the extraordinary sort of religious feeling there was in those days to see how they behaved on the occasion. "They tore their hair; they beat the walls and pavement of the church with their shoulders and the palms of their hands; they uttered tremendous curses against God and his saints; . . . they wished they had rather died than have seen such a day." However, they soon set to

1220.
Canterbury
Cathedral.

work to repair the evil, and built it up again more splendid than before, filling the windows with painted glass, many of them being pictures of the miracles wrought at the tomb of St. Thomas. Next a most costly shrine was made to contain his bones, and when all was complete the young king and a magnificent procession, with all the great lords, archbishops, bishops, and a great many Frenchmen and other foreigners, assembled to carry the new shrine to its resting-place.

9. With all this religious and artistic work, the archbishop was not the man to forget the liberty of the people and the Great Charter. When Henry was about fifteen the archbishop and the other nobles demanded of him to confirm it again. One of the king's counsellors objected, saying that the charter had been extorted by force, and the king ought not to be bound by it. But the archbishop was very indignant at this, and said angrily to the counsellor, "William, if you loved the king you would not disturb the peace of the kingdom." When the boy-king saw the archbishop so angry he immediately promised to observe the charter, though he tried to escape from keeping this promise afterwards.

10. After the archbishop's death troubles began to increase. For one thing, there was again a great dispute about who should succeed him, and again it was referred to the Pope to decide. This time the Pope determined to take the king's side, the reason of which was that he was in great want of money, and the king's party promised him an immense reward if he would favour them. We may be sure the Pope did not mention this motive. He sent letters full of the most wonderful compliments to the Church of Canterbury. He said it was "the most noble limb of the apostolic see;" it was "the paradise of pleasure and the garden of sweets;" it had in it "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (by which he is said to have meant the archbishopric), and "the tree of life" (meaning the monks), and "from it flowed a miracle-working river" (the blood of Thomas à Becket). After all these compliments, he said he meant to place in that paradise the man whom the king recommended as archbishop.

1228.
Death of
Stephen
Langton.

The Pope
interferes
again.

11. The reward the Pope had for this was a promise that he should have a tenth part of all the moveable property in England and Ireland. But this was rather easier to promise than to perform. For when the Pope's messengers came to England to get the money, "the earls, barons, and all the laity declared

plainly that they would not give it." The bishops and clergy, "after two or three days' deliberation, and no slight grumbling," were obliged to consent, lest they should be excommunicated. The Pope's chaplain exacted what he could get in such a harsh and unjust way that it increased the "grumbling" very much; he even made the clergy pay the tenth part of the value of the corn which was still growing green in the fields. The bishops had to sell or pawn the sacred sacramental cups and other valuables out of the churches, and Roger says that only "one circumstance gave some slight consolation and comfort," which was, that other countries were in the same plight as themselves, and were being taxed and tormented in the same way by the head of the Christian Church.

1229.
Papal
extortions.

12. All through this long reign we come upon the same thing over and over again—the extortions of the Pope. One day there were some English clergymen at Rome whom the Pope saw; they were very handsomely dressed; more especially, they had their vestments trimmed with some fine gold fringe, which pleased the Pope's eyes greatly. He asked where this splendid fringe was made; and when he heard it was in England, he exclaimed, "Of a truth England is a garden of delights; truly it is an inexhaustible well, in which many things abound; from which many things may be extorted." So he immediately sent out "sacred letters" to the abbots in England forthwith to procure him some of this golden fringe to ornament his own vestments, but sent no money to pay for it. The English abbots had to do that part of the business, "but it struck many with detestation of the evident avarice of the Roman Church," says Matthew Paris, another monk of St. Alban's, who tells us this story. All the men who wrote histories at this time were monks, but when we read what they say about the avarice and extortion of the Pope and his people, we could imagine their narratives had been written by the most vigorous Protestants.

13. Although even yet there was no difference of belief in England, there is little doubt that all this helped to pave the way for the Reformation by alienating the hearts of the people, and doing away their respect for the Pope. Not content with always grasping for money, the Pope also sent Italian clergymen to take possession of the best livings in England. People began to rise up against this. Letters were sent all over the country to all the bishops and clergy, urging them to resist. Nobody could exactly say

Indignation
in
England.

who sent them, but the writers said of themselves that "they would rather die than be put to shame by the Romans." Not only so, but armed men began to go about. One of the rich Roman clergymen, who had been made Canon of St. Paul's, was seized and hidden away, none knew by whom. After about five weeks he made his appearance again, safe and sound, though, as was said, with his purse emptied. Another, whose barns and granaries were well stored, was likewise visited by some armed men, who emptied the barns for him, "sold the corn on good terms for the benefit of the whole district, and charitably gave a portion of it to the poor."

14. Once the king, the nobles, the bishops, and all the people joined in sending some spirited letters to protest against the Pope's extortions and injustice; but Henry was too weak to keep firm, he was soon frightened into taking part with the Pope again. But though Stephen Langton was dead, many of the English bishops and archbishops followed in his footsteps, and struggled nobly for English freedom both in Church and State. This is what the same historian, Matthew Paris, tells of an Archbishop of York whom the Pope excommunicated. "The archbishop endured all the tyranny of the Pope with patience, and did not despair of receiving consolation from heaven. Neither would he bestow the rich revenues of the Church on unknown and unworthy persons from beyond the Alps" (meaning the Italian clergy), "nor submit like a woman to be bent to the will of the Pope. . . . On which account, the more he was cursed by orders of the Pope, the more he was blessed by the people."

15. All this avarice and extortion, besides the distress it caused in taking so much money and corn away from the people, worked very ill in another way. Men lost their respect for a Church the head of which showed **Irreligion.** himself so unworthy of respect, and rather naturally, if not wisely, began to lose their respect for religion also. It appears that at this time the mass of the people were very irreligious. Probably the Pope's plan of the interdict had helped this a good deal. Shutting up the churches and having no prayers or sermons must have been a very poor way of improving the people. Most likely a great many got used to it, and lost their care for going to church at all. This was not only in England. The whole history of Europe at this period is full of the same sort of thing; the Pope interdicting, excommunicating, and extorting money in all directions. Consequently, religion was everywhere at a very low ebb.

16. But there arose two great "saints" in this dark time to arouse the world from its sins and its sleep. Though we must differ from these saints in many ways, we can feel that they had a fervent love for God, and one of them, certainly, perhaps both, a fervent love for man. One of these was an Italian, the other a Spaniard; and though they did not come to England themselves, a great many of their followers did come, and soon gained a wonderful influence over the people. The Italian

St. Francis. saint was called Francis, and though we may, perhaps, think him mistaken or credulous, he was beyond doubt a true and noble saint. He was all made up of purity, self-denial, humility, and love. He saw the horrible evils of the pride and luxury and avarice of the clergy, and he called on his followers to renounce all these. He, though the son of a rich man, gave up all he had, and took poverty for his bride. His heart overflowed with love, first to Christ, next to Christ's brothers on earth, the poor and the sick and the afflicted; next even to the birds and beasts. It will hardly be wasting our time to read the little sermon which he preached to the birds. "My little sisters," he said, as they sang and twittered around him, "you have talked long enough; it is my turn now; listen to the word of your Creator and be silent." "My little brothers, you should love and praise the Author of your being, who has clothed you with feathers, and given you wings wherewith to fly where you will. You were the first created of all animals. He preserved your race in the ark. He has given the pure atmosphere for your dwelling-place. You sow not, neither do you reap. Without any care of your own, He gives you lofty trees to build your nests in, and watches over your young. Therefore give praise to your bountiful Creator."

All the wild animals loved him, and it is no wonder that those who were gentlest and noblest among men attached themselves to him also.

17. The Spanish saint was named Dominic. Many beautiful old pictures are still to be seen of him; and he too was passionately followed by many holy men; but he did not care so much for loving deeds as St. Francis did. **St. Dominic.** He thought more of people's belief, and in the end his followers did a great deal of harm. But now these two great men, one of whom has been called the Apostle of Faith, and the other the Apostle of Works, stood out against the pride, the love of money, the cruelties, and the sins of the Church and the world. They both longed earnestly to save souls. For this they both gave up

all they had and all they were, and crowds of followers gathered round them. For in their secret hearts men love self-sacrifice and devotion more than sloth and ease; they have the Divine spark within them, however deeply buried, which is ready to kindle up when the sacred flame is visible in the life of another. So there were found many and many who were ready to follow the call, and to take up the cross.

18. They were called brothers; in French "frères;" in the French-English "friars." Numbers of them came to England. The Dominicans wore black dresses, and were called Black Brothers, or Black Friars; they had a place **The friars.** near Blackfriars Bridge, which still bears their name. The Franciscans wore grey dresses, and were called Grey Friars. These friars went about among the ignorant, neglected people, preaching most fervent, earnest sermons. The people had perhaps hardly ever heard sermons before, and they crowded to listen. It was a great religious "revival;" far more stirring, because in such great contrast to the ignorance all around, than even those we sometimes see now, and these men's lives were a still better sermon. Poor, barefooted, and humble, they lived and worked among the sick and needy. In those days, when people were very ignorant of sanitary laws, of everything to do with drainage, cleanliness, and ventilation, there used to be most frightful illnesses of which we know nothing now except by hearsay; leprosy, for instance, was very common. The brothers of St. Francis settled down among these wretched sufferers, and devoted themselves to tending and comforting them. Thus religion began to be felt again as a real thing among the people.

19. But the great fault of the Dominicans soon began to show itself. Not content with preaching what they thought was the truth, they by and bye joined very heartily with the Pope and the bishops in persecuting those who did not believe just the same that they did. It never once entered their minds that they might, perhaps, be mistaken themselves; nor that, as long as people lived innocent lives, no one had any right to ill-treat them for their opinions. No; everybody was to believe exactly the same thing, and those who thought differently were to be horribly punished, and to be looked on as grievous wolves. The Dominicans made a sort of pun on their name, which in Latin, if split in two, means Dogs of the Lord—Domini-canēs; and they thought it a great part of the business of good dogs to harass and kill the wolves, even though these "wolves" were often very harmless and very good people. A great deal of most cruel persecution

went on at this time in the south of France against some "heretics" who were really much better Christians than their persecutors. But as yet there were no wolves or heretics in England. A very few poor Germans had come into the country in the time of Henry II., who seem to have been almost what we should call Protestants now; but they had been most cruelly treated, and had made no converts.

20. Another great step was now made, which would in due time help the coming reformation. We are, as yet, very far from that apparently. But it was doubtless growing underground a long while before it came to light and showed forth its branches and fruit. The great step I now speak of is the advance of learning and education, and especially the growth of the universities. Strange to say, nobody quite knows the beginning of either Oxford or Cambridge. It has often been said that King Alfred founded the University of Oxford. But this is not believed by modern scholars, and probably it was only said because Alfred was such a great hero, and "England's Darling," that people thought whatever good thing had been done of old must have been done by him. A great many other things are laid to his credit with which he really had nothing to do.

21. But at this time Oxford began to be very famous, and crowded with scholars and teachers. Instead of only learning theology, men began to study other things; they began to read the thoughts of great and wise men of old—men who had lived long before Christ; men of other religions, and other ways and habits, other governments and other ideas. And so they began to have wider thoughts themselves, and to see how many more things there were in heaven and earth than they had ever dreamt of. They also began to study more accurately mathematics, and natural science, as astronomy and optics. That is to say, they began to learn something of the way the world is made, and the natural laws which govern it. When we say natural laws, what can we mean but God's laws? the laws which He made for the powers of nature, and which He does not alter and change perpetually.

22. We have seen how superstitious the people were then; what strange things they believed, such as we could never believe now. Some of their cleverest writers tell these tales with the utmost gravity. One of them writes how the arm and hand of St. Thomas, which he put in our Lord's side, was kept in a vessel in a certain city, and by it the people of that city made their

judgments. "For when there is any dissension between two parties, both parties write their cause in two bills, and put them in the hand of St. Thomas; and anon, he casts away the bill of the wrong cause, and holds still the bill with the right cause." Another tells of a little society of wild ducks which were under the protection of a particular saint; and if any injury befell the Church or the clergy they withdrew from the pond which they generally inhabited, and would not return till "condign punishment had overtaken the offenders. Meanwhile, during their absence the waters of the pond, which were before very limpid and clear, became stinking and putrid."

23. Again, we know how frightened everybody was if there were an eclipse of the sun or moon, or if a comet appeared. They thought that a sure sign that something fearful was going to happen, and would gaze in awe and terror at the sky, wondering what it might be. Now, why are we not frightened when we see an eclipse of the sun or of the moon? why do we all laugh at those ridiculous stories about the ducks, &c.?

24. Because now we have learnt something about the laws of the universe, and we know that neither God nor the saints are always interfering with those laws. How grandly David writes of this.

"Praise Him, sun and moon :
Praise Him, all ye stars of light.
Praise Him, all ye heavens,
And ye waters that are above the heavens.
Let them praise the name of the Lord :
For He spake the word, and they were made ;
He commanded, and they were created.
He hath made them fast for ever and ever :
He hath given them a law which shall not be broken."

Astronomers have now learnt so much of this *law which shall not be broken* that they know when an eclipse will take place, and why it takes place, and when a comet will come into sight, and that neither have anything at all to do with our acts or our misfortunes. Thus we may hope that studying the laws of nature is really studying the laws and thought of God; and it quite lifts us up from those foolish ideas which make God and the saints seem to be changeable and uncertain, sometimes even childish and revengeful.

25. It was just about this time that the first Englishman began to study these things. His name was Roger Bacon. He was one of those men who take an interest in everything, from the sun and the stars down to the com- **Roger Bacon.**

mon dust at their feet. He began to study the true nature of these things. It is said that he first invented telescopes, which give such wonderful revelations of the distant heaven above us. He is also said to have invented gunpowder; we could heartily wish that that never had been invented; but Roger Bacon did not discover it with any thought of blowing his fellow-creatures to pieces with it; it was only as a curious experiment. This great man, being so much wiser than the rest of the world, was thought by the common people to be in league with the devil; the noise and flash of his gunpowder might very well frighten people dreadfully, and would seem quite demoniacal; and Roger Bacon had a very hard life, as many great men have. Though hundreds of years passed before he found followers, and before his thoughts became the thoughts of other men, his work did not really die; it is bearing fruit still. And we may hope that to him study was its own reward, as it is to those who love it.

LECTURE XXIII. THE PARLIAMENT.

The foreigners. The king's extravagance. Demands for money. The barons resist. Simon de Montfort. The parliament. Character of Prince Edward. The last Crusade.

1. WHILE all this was going on in the nation the king grew up, and soon began to affront his nobles and all his subjects by his extravagance and love of foreigners. His mother had come from Angoulême, and he himself by and ^{The} ~~bye~~ ^{foreigners.} married a princess from Provence, and crowds of their relations and dependants came to England. Henry, who was too amiable to say "No," received them all kindly, enriched them, and honoured them. He brought in other Frenchmen himself, who were "poor and covetous after wealth." "These men," says Roger of Wendover, "used their utmost endeavours to oppress the natural English subjects and nobles, calling them traitors, and accusing them of treachery to the king; and he, simple man that he was, believed their lies, and gave them the charge of all the counties and baronies, as also of all the youth of the nobility, both male and female, who were foully degraded by ignoble marriages." Wherever the king went he was surrounded by crowds of these foreigners. One of them in particular, who worked a great deal of mischief, was made Bishop of Winchester, and "nothing was done in England but what the Bishop of Winchester and this host of foreigners determined on," Roger complains. So it goes on and on; fresh crowds kept pouring in; more and more angry grew the English.

2. The king's foolish generosity and extravagance kept him always in want of money. His sister Isabella was married to the Emperor of Germany, and her wedding ornaments and trousseau were so splendid that they "appeared ^{1235.} to surpass kingly wealth." "She shone forth with such a profusion of rings and gold necklaces, and other splendid jewels, with silk and thread garments, and other like ornaments which usually attract the gaze and excite the desires of women, that they

appeared invaluable." Then Roger, who, though a monk, seems rather to enjoy all these pomps and vanities, tells about her beautiful bed, and the fine sheets and pillows she had, and of her cups and dishes of the purest gold and silver, "and what seemed superfluous to every one, all the cooking-pots, large and small, were of pure silver." She was provided too with many fine, highly-trained horses, having their saddles, bridles, and other trappings elaborately gilt and embroidered.

**Extrava-
gance.**

3. This is the last thing Roger of Wendover tells us; his 'Chronicle' ends here very patriotically, for he takes a pride in tracing up the pedigree of Isabella, through Henry I.'s wife Matilda to "the renowned King Alfred (leaving out all mention of the Conqueror William), and through Alfred back to Adam, adding that, being "descended from such ancestors, she was in every respect worthy of a marriage with the emperor."

4. All those splendid things which Henry gave to his sister, including the silver saucepans, must certainly have cost a great deal of money, as well as his own marriage festival, which was likewise very magnificent. He got as much money as he could out of the people by all sorts of means; but though he made them very angry, he could not get enough. He was in debt; he was obliged to summon the nobles together to see what he could obtain from them.

5. We get the account of all this from another and still cleverer monk of St. Albans, who went on writing the history of the times he lived in after Roger left off, and who, perhaps because he was born or educated in that city, is generally called Matthew Paris.

He tells us that on the summons of the king the nobles assembled "in a countless multitude," being told that they were wanted "to arrange the royal business, and matters concerning the whole kingdom." But when they met together they found out that the "royal business" was to ask for a thirtieth part of their whole property.

The king's clerk spoke for him very pitifully and meekly. He made a few excuses, and then said, "The king is now destitute of money, without which any king is indeed desolate; he therefore humbly demands assistance of you in money."

6. It is not wonderful that the nobles, "not expecting anything of this sort, murmured greatly," and at last replied with indignation. They said they were oppressed on all sides; constantly paying such large sums of money; and

**1237.
The nobles
are
summoned.**

Discontent.

"they declared that it would be unworthy of them, and injurious to them, to allow a king so easily led away, who had never repelled nor even frightened one of the enemies of the kingdom, even the least of them, to extort so much money so often, and by so many arguments, from his natural subjects, as if they were slaves of the lowest condition." They also said that they ought to help in choosing the king's counsellors and ministers.

7. Then the king tried to excuse himself by saying he had spent so much money on his own marriage and his sister's marriage. To which they openly replied that he had done all this without the advice of his subjects, and they ought not to share the punishment, as they were innocent of the crime.

8. This is a very important point to notice, because it involves another of the great principles which the English kings and nation struggled and fought about at intervals for many centuries; namely, that the people who pay **Taxation.** the money ought to have a voice in the spending it; that the government is not to lay on taxes without saying what the money is wanted for, and hearing whether the country, the people who are to pay, approve it or not. That, too, is firmly settled now. The government cannot lay on a single tax, or get a sixpence out of the country, without saying what they want it for; and the House of Parliament, which represents the country, if they do not approve, may say No. This was, however, quite a new idea about this time. Before that the king and his ministers laid on the taxes as they thought fit. A good king would have only laid on just taxes, and for good purposes. A wicked king would lay on unjust taxes, and for bad purposes. A weak and extravagant king (like Henry III.) would also lay on unjust and heavy taxes for foolish purposes. So there is no doubt the barons were quite right in demurring to the demand.

9. The end of it this time was, that the king submitted to the advice of his subjects, proclaimed Magna Charta over again, and made other good promises, which pleased everybody so much that they gave him the money he asked for. But about five years afterwards he wanted money again; he had broken all his promises, and no one knew what had become of the money. This time the nobles were still more angry, and bound themselves by a most solemn oath to give the king no more.

10. All this time a great deal of good was gradually working out of the evil. The more money the king demanded, the more good rules the barons made to limit his power. Parliament began to meet more and more often. This **Parliament.**

word "parliament" is quite new in English history at the time we are speaking of. It was a French word, and means "talking" or making speeches. It is not certainly so good a word as the old-fashioned "witan" or "witenagemot," the assembly of wise men, but it grew more and more like the old assemblies of our free ancestors. One very great and most important change in this direction was made at this time. The council, or witan, only consisted of great lords, bishops, abbots, and the like. They helped the king to make all the laws and appoint all the taxes. But it was not only they who had to pay the taxes. All the smaller country gentlemen, knights and yeomen, had to help in that. Why, then, were they not to have a voice in the spending?*

11. There were great difficulties in the way. England being now all one country, under one king, instead of consisting of numbers of little tribes, there was no place where such a multitude could assemble. Nor would they all want the trouble of coming a long journey to London, or wherever the parliament might be held.

Representative government. What was to be done? A very good plan had been devised. These country gentlemen and knights, of whom there were a great many in every county, might choose two or three of their number to go to parliament, might tell them what they wished about the laws or about the taxes, and bid them speak for them. Those who were thus chosen to represent the others were called "knights of the shire." And so they are still; we have never yet been able to find a better plan than this; it is the beginning of what is called "representative government."

12. These knights of the shire or county had already been called up sometimes to the meetings of the council before now; but there were also other people who had to help pay the taxes, and very rich people too, who had never yet been allowed to say a word, either as to the laying them on, or the spending of them. They were not nobles or knights at all, nor had they any land belonging to them. These were the rich merchants and tradesmen in the towns. The Lord Mayor of London, indeed, was already considered a very important person, and, as we saw, was one of the twenty-five who had been appointed to harass the king. But now, towards the end of Henry III.'s reign, the inhabitants of the large towns were called on to elect men to speak their mind in parliament, and to look after their interests. This also goes on to the present day. We have

* In old times (see p. 42) every freeman had been entitled to a place in the great assembly of his tribe.

exactly the same sort of parliament now that was settled in this reign. We have the king or queen to preside ; we have all the lords of England, the bishops and archbishops ; we have the county members, the "knights of the shire ;" and we have the borough members, elected by the towns. All the principal alterations which have been made since that time have been only in giving more and more of the people the power of voting for members.

13. We cannot suppose that great changes like these were brought about without a struggle. The king and the barons at last came to open war. Very curiously, the man who headed the barons, and who fought so hard for English freedom, was by birth a Frenchman, but he had large estates in England, and had married the king's sister. He was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. The king, who was now growing old, had a fine brave helper in his eldest son Edward. Edward naturally took his father's part, and fought in his cause, but he had good sense enough to see how much wisdom there was on the other side, and when he became king he did not follow his father's example, but rather trod in the steps of his uncle, Simon de Montfort.

1263.
Civil War.

Simon de
Montfort.

14. Two great battles took place between the king and the earl. The first was at Lewes, and in it Simon conquered, and the king and his son were made prisoners. It was while the king was his prisoner that Earl Simon was able to settle those matters about calling on the townspeople to send members to parliament. Very soon after his famous parliament was held Prince Edward contrived to escape. He soon put himself at the head of an army, which fought with Simon at Evesham. This battle was won by Edward ; the old King Henry was rescued, and Simon was slain.

1265.
His par-
liament.

15. "Thus ended the labours of that noble man, Earl Simon," writes an old historian, "who gave up not only his property, but also his person, to defend the poor from oppression, and for the maintenance of justice and the rights of the kingdom." He adds that the earl was distinguished both for learning and for piety, and that he put great confidence in the prayers of religious men. He was so loved and honoured by the people that after his death he was said to be a saint, and it was reported that many miracles were worked at his tomb. His great work was never undone, though he died in the hour of defeat. His young conqueror, Edward, who was one of the noblest and greatest of our kings, carried it on when, after a few quiet years more, Henry died, and his turn came to reign.

16. It seems a great mistake that he is always called Edward I., since there had been already three English kings named Edward, though he was the first who had borne the name since the Norman Conquest. It looks as if all the kings before that time had been mere nobodies; but we know that was not so. The first Edward was the son of Alfred, and a very glorious king, who ought not to be forgotten. The third was Edward the Confessor, whom both English and French regarded with great reverence, and after whom this Edward was named.

17. His reign was a very prosperous and happy one for England. He was a true Englishman; he loved his people, and his people loved him. He was not by any means a perfect character; but a man need not (happily) be quite perfect to be dearly loved and honoured, and to do great and noble deeds. He had already won the admiration and confidence of the nation before his father's death, though he had done some fierce and cruel things too. But he was the sort of man an Englishman loves. He was tall and handsome. In his youth he was fair, and had yellow hair, but as he grew older we are told that "he was swarthy, and the hair of his head black and curled;" in his old age it was snow-white. He was brave, clever, and affectionate. The English have always loved to see their royal family affectionate and dutiful to each other. Edward was a most loving son to his weak but kindly father. When the news was brought him that the old man was dead, he was so grieved that the people about him were astonished. It was he who brought from abroad the rare and costly marbles which decorate his father's beautiful tomb in Westminster Abbey. In the battle of Lewes, where he and the king had been made prisoners, he had shown himself very fierce and revengeful, especially against the men of London. But he could be forgiven for that, because the reason he was so fierce against them was, that a little while before they had insulted and endangered his mother. He was also a most affectionate husband.

18. Edward had another great virtue, which is very dear to Englishmen—he loved truth and honesty. We have seen how insincere the other kings had been, and how they were always breaking their word. One of the things the Pope thought he had a right to do now was to release people from keeping their promises, and even their most solemn oaths. During the later part of Henry III.'s reign, when Simon de Montfort and the barons had made him and Edward swear to redress the

grievances of the nation, and to govern according to law, the Pope by and bye sent over word to absolve them from keeping the oath. King Henry was glad enough to be absolved ; but Edward, though he loved his father, would not follow his example. He had chosen for his motto two very plain English words, "Keep troth ;" and he would not be absolved by the Pope from keeping his word.

Edward was not perfect ; and as his life went on he did not always "keep troth ;" but at the bottom of his heart he was sincere. He fell into faults sometimes, but he recovered himself, and he would frankly own where he saw himself to have been wrong.

19. Then, too, Edward was a true image of chivalry. He wanted to be a perfect "knight ;" and he had both the good and the bad parts of that character. At one time, before he was king, whilst he was engaged with a troop of men in restoring order and putting down the revolvers, he heard of a famous robber in a wood near. This man, Adam de Gordon, was reputed to be very strong and brave ; and Edward, who was also strong and brave, longed to try which could fight best in single combat. Instead of allowing the two little armies to have a regular battle, he forbade them to interfere, so that he and the robber chief might fight it out between them. After a long conflict Edward got the better, but he was so delighted with the skill and valour of the man that he advised him to surrender himself, promising him his life and a good fortune. This robber was, in fact, a gentleman by birth, who in the wars had lost all his property, and had taken to a wild life ; but he now threw away his arms and surrendered to the prince. Edward kept his word, restored his inheritance, and became his faithful friend.

20. At another time Edward went to a great tournament in France. He had 1000 followers ; but the Frenchman who had challenged him came with nearly 2000. The English began to see that the Frenchman had deceived them ; it was not to be a mock fight, but a real fight ; and they were but one to two. But they behaved like true Englishmen, and defended themselves gallantly. Edward himself was attacked in a furious way by the French count ; but he sate like a rock, and at the right moment fell in his turn on the count, till he made him cry for mercy. This story shows the dark side of chivalry as well as its heroic one. In the affray we hear that the knights who fell were saved alive, but the poor followers, the men who fought on foot, were killed, "because they were but *rascals*, and no great account was made of them."

21. As for Edward's cleverness, we will only read what Baker says of him. "He had in him the two wisdoms—not often found in any singly; both together, seldom or never—an ability of judgment in himself, and a readiness to hear the judgment of others."

22. He was married some years before his father's death. His wife was a Spanish princess, named Eleanor. When she came to England she was received with great honour.

1254.

His
marriage.

"The king gave orders," says Matthew Paris, "that she should be received with the greatest honour and reverence at London, as well as at other places; but especially at London, where her arrival was to be celebrated by processions, illuminations, ringing of bells, songs, and other special demonstrations of joy and festivity. On her approaching that city, therefore, the citizens went to meet her, dressed in holy-day clothes, and mounted on richly-caparisoned horses; and when the noble daughter-in-law of the king arrived at the place of abode assigned her, she found it hung with palls of silk and tapestry like a temple, and even the floor was covered with arras." This seems to have been the first time Englishmen had ever seen a carpet on the floor; they were still content with hay and rushes, as Becket had been; for Matthew Paris adds, "This was done by the Spaniards, according to the custom of their country; but this excessive pride excited the laughter and derision of the people" (rather like the John Bull of our days, who is ever ready to laugh at "new-fangled" plans to which he is not accustomed).

23. Eleanor proved a most sweet and loving wife, and Edward was devotedly attached to her. When, at last, after many years of happy life, she died at some distance from London, either in Lincolnshire or Nottinghamshire, the king brought her body to Westminster to be buried. That was a long and troublesome journey in those days, when the roads were very bad, and they had to rest several nights on the way. At each place where they halted for the night King Edward afterwards caused a monument to be set up. The Gothic architecture was now in its prime, and these monuments were very beautiful. One of them still stands by the side of a road near Northampton; it is richly ornamented with sculptured niches and statues of Queen Eleanor. The last place they stopped at was a little village between London and Westminster, and there too a beautiful monument was set up. It was said that it was called "the dear queen's cross." In those days the kings and queens still talked French more than English,

so this name was in French "Chère Reine;" and we may still see a model of Edward's monument at Charing Cross, with the "dear queen's" images on it. But though this would be a very pretty derivation for the name, it appears that little village had been called Charing long before.

24. After Simon de Montfort's death, and when all was quiet in England, Prince Edward went on a Crusade to the Holy Land, accompanied by his wife. This was the ninth and last Crusade. Like all the others, there was 1271.

much bravery and self-devotion, as well as much cruelty. But they could not gain their end; they could not win back Jerusalem. By degrees the kings of Europe began to realize that they had better stay at home and govern their own kingdoms, than wander away, spending their own lives and their people's lives on what seemed at last only a dream, though a beautiful dream.

25. Though the Crusades were so mixed with evil, with pride and jealousy and cruelty, though so many noble lives were wasted and buried there, we cannot think they were all evil. There was true religion, true, unselfish devotion, in many hearts. And in other ways too they worked some good. They led people to travel, and to see other countries and other races of men; and this must have made some of them larger-hearted, as King Richard had learned to see the nobleness and goodness of the Mahometan Saladin.

But Edward's adventures in Palestine must not detain us; we have quite enough to do with England, and Wales, and Scotland. He was still abroad when his father died, and he by no means hurried himself to come home, for it was not till August 1274 that he made his appearance in England.

26. The coronation-feast must have been something like a feast indeed. Orders were sent to provide 380 oxen, 430 sheep, 450 pigs, 18 wild boars (so there must have been still wild boars in England, but apparently not many), and more than 19,000 fowls and capons. He and his queen were welcomed with the greatest joy and honour: "the streets were hung with rich cloths of silk and arras and tapestry; the aldermen of the city threw out of their windows handfuls of gold and silver, to signify the great gladness they had conceived of his safe return; the conduits ran plentifully with white wine and red, that each creature might drink his fill." Besides the aldermen's gold and silver, 500 great horses, on some of which Edward and his followers had ridden to the banquet, were let loose among the crowd, any one to take them for his own as he could.

LECTURE XXIV.—EDWARD I. ENGLAND AND WALES.

Edward's government. Dispute about taxation. Humphrey Bohun. The old over-lordship of England in Wales and Scotland. The Welsh people. Conquest of Wales.

1. EDWARD deserved a hearty welcome. He set his mind to govern his people well, and for their good and happiness. Though he had fought against Simon de Montfort on his father's side, yet he now clearly saw that his plans had been for the real advantage of the country, and he carried them out himself. He summoned parliaments such as Simon had summoned, consisting of the lords and bishops, the county members, and the town members. 1272.

2. But things were very different then from what they are now. We all know how fond people are of being members of parliament now; how they do and say all they can to induce the electors to choose them, and look upon it as the greatest honour, as indeed it is. But in those days it was considered a great burden and a great trouble. It was very difficult to get the members to come to parliament; the towns did not like the trouble and expense of sending representatives (who were paid in those days), and it was quite difficult to assemble them together. People did not as yet know the good that would come of it. It is generally a few, or perhaps only one wise man, who first sees what is the right thing to do, as the world slowly changes; he is probably called a fool for it, or mad, for the common run of people cannot see what he sees. Perhaps, and indeed most likely, he gets killed, as Simon was, or despised and half-starved, as Roger Bacon was. But by and bye his ideas tell; a few more people begin to understand them; then more and more; at last his wise thought is believed by everybody—it becomes a sort of common-place; and in the end the truth prevails, and must prevail, in the world which God made.

3. Another set of people who might have come to parliament

would not come. Those were the clergy. Just as there were bishops in the Upper House, there might have been clergymen in the Lower. But they would not come. And now all a clergyman can do in governing his country is just what other men can do ; he can vote for members of parliament, but he cannot be one himself. This is probably a very good thing. For highly as the clergy are to be respected in their own sphere, in teaching and studying, in caring for the poor and in visiting the sick, it has been found in all history that they are not good at governing. We have already seen enough of the Pope's government, and the harm it did ; but when Protestant and Puritan clergy have got into power (as they did once in Scotland) it has not answered well, either for themselves or the country.

4. But though Edward fully approved of the new sort of parliament, allowing all the principal classes of people to be represented, there was one thing which he took a very long time in consenting to, and a most important thing too ; which was, that no taxes should be laid on without the consent of the people taxed. He had a masterful temper, and he wished to lay on the taxes himself as he thought fit. He was not a selfish, extravagant, and foolish king, like his father, and very likely would have laid on fair taxes, and for wise purposes. But the barons knew better than to give up the right they had fought for and won. Though Edward was a good king, who was to say what his son might be ? It came to a struggle. There were two principal nobles who withstood the king. When they found that he obstinately held out they refused to obey him. He was going to Flanders on a war, and he ordered his nobles to follow him. They refused. Then the king said to one of them, Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, " Sir 1297.
Earl, you shall either go or hang." But Humphrey stoutly answered, " Sir King, I will neither go nor hang." The end of the struggle was that right conquered. The king owned that he was wrong, and gave in ; the principle was firmly established. But a king, some centuries after this, threw the whole country into rebellion and lost his own life by trying, as Edward tried, to evade it—to levy taxes at his own will, without the consent of the people.

5. Meanwhile, Edward made many good laws for the protection and prosperity of the nation, and the land was very peaceful and thriving. But we must now turn to Edward's Wars.
wars ; for though we will never, if we can help it, waste much time over wars in foreign parts, Edward's principal

wars were in Great Britain itself, and brought us into connection with other people dwelling in the island, who are now our fellow-subjects. He made up his mind to leave France alone. His father had longed to get back his possessions on the Continent, but Edward saw that was hopeless, and he turned his whole attention to Great Britain.

6. We have now travelled over a period of more than 1300 years in the history of our country ; that is, from the time when its written history began. Through all this time there has been one great difference between its condition then and its condition now. *Now* the British Isles are regarded as one nation, governed by one queen and one parliament, and called the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Great Britain, of course, includes England, Wales, and Scotland. Our history, so far, has been working up to this result. In the early part of it, after the English first came over from Germany, even England itself was not one. There were many different kingdoms and kings. Little by little, these kingdoms grew together. First there was one principal king, and the other kings were under him ; then by degrees the other kings dropped off, and the one principal became the only one among the English.

7. But besides the English, there were a great many other people in the British Isles. There were three sets of Welsh people, in Wales, Strathclyde, and Cornwall, speaking another language and having a great many kings of their own. There were the Scotch, who were also divided into different sets of people, with their own kings and chiefs. And there were the Irish. As the centuries went on, some of these began to be united to England too. Some of the Welsh kingdoms, as Cornwall, and a good part of Strathclyde, were swallowed up, and became part of England. The greatest of the English kings became a sort of head or overlord to most of the others. Alfred's son, the first Edward, had been, as they then said, " the father and lord " of all the Scotch and all the Welsh, besides being King of England. The Scotch and the Welsh princes did homage to the English kings again and again, as when Edgar the Peaceable was rowed on the river Dee by eight tributary kings, and again when Macbeth and the other Scotchmen did homage to Cnut. Afterwards Henry II. conquered Ireland, so that things seemed to be gradually working towards the united kingdom which we have now.

8. But all this time the union had been very loose. None of the smaller kingdoms could believe that it would be really for their good to be united into one strong body ; they all wanted

still to be independent, and say, "Who is lord over us?" Sometimes, and indeed very often, the Welsh and the Scotch tried to throw off their submission; then there would come fights and a great deal of trouble, as in Edward the Confessor's reign, when Harold had to go twice to fight the Welsh and compel them to submit. Now Edward I., who had given up almost all idea of regaining his grandfather's lost possessions in France, wanted to be the head and a sort of emperor in Britain, and that all the other princes should be really under him, and do homage to him. He saw very plainly how good it would be for the whole island of Great Britain to be united. England was the largest, strongest, and richest part, therefore his plan was for England to be head; but he meant Wales and Scotland to be well governed by just and good laws, and not to be tyrannized over. He began with Wales.

9. We have not heard much about the Welsh for a long time. They were, it will be remembered, the descendants of the ancient Britons, whom our forefathers, the English, had driven away into the western parts of the island. **Wales and the Welsh.** The same archdeacon, Giraldus Cambrensis, who travelled in Ireland in the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I., wrote also a very interesting account of Wales. He was indeed, as his name tells us, half a Welshman himself, but highly educated and living at court. His description of Wales he dedicated to Stephen Langton, and though it was written a little before the time of Edward I. it is not likely that things had changed much.

10. The ancient Britons had learned Christianity before the English came, and had never forgotten their religion. At this time the Welsh were still considered a very religious people, religious after the fashion of that time. **Religion.** The Archdeacon Gerald tells us "they show a greater respect than other nations to churches and ecclesiastical persons, to the relics of saints, bells, holy books, and the cross, which they devoutly revere." They had a very odd way of showing honour to the Trinity, which was that "they sit down by three to a dish, in honour of the Trinity." Even up to this time it was not usual for people to have plates to themselves, but two, three, or four people would go shares in one dish. They had another religious custom at meals which was rather more reasonable. "They give the first piece broken off from every loaf of bread to the poor." But they did not use a great deal of bread. They do not seem to have made much progress in civilization all this time, and, like most half civilized people, they lived more on milk, cheese,

butter, and meat than on bread, because they knew and cared very little about agriculture, nor was their country well suited to it.

11. They cared nothing about trade or manufacture either. For ships they had little wicker boats covered with skins, just as the old Britons had. Such boats are still used

Arts. on the Welsh rivers for fishing. They lived in little houses made of boughs of trees twisted together, and which would last about a year. They had no gardens nor orchards, but would gladly eat the fruit of both when given to them.

12. Besides religion, the one thing they cared most for was fighting, and they seem in their way to have been very good warriors. They were light, active, and bold; they

Warfare. carried light arms too; for as Wales is full of mountains, and at that time was also full of bogs, heavy-armed men and horses could not have got on at all. If they ever happened to be at peace, they still "meditated on war," and the young men were always practising themselves in climbing mountains and enduring all sorts of fatigues and hardships. They thought it a disgrace to die in bed.

13. They dearly loved their country, as most mountaineers do, and they dearly loved their liberty; and they liked fighting and plundering so well that they were very troublesome neighbours to the English. But with all this quarrelsomeness, they seem to have been pleasant people, with tastes and ways that were very charming and refined. They loved music as much as the Irish did. Their chief instrument was the harp, and Gerald says they could play it in a most skilful and beautiful way, besides which, they could sing very harmoniously in parts.

14. They were naturally a bright, quick, clever people, and remarkably kind and hospitable. It must have been very pleasant to spend a day in a Welsh family. If a

Manners and habits. visitor came in the morning he was entertained all day "with the conversation of young women and the music of the harp, for every house has its young women and harps allotted for this purpose." This sounds very agreeable, but they certainly appear to have feasted the mind better than the body. They did not get much to eat till supper-time, and even then "the kitchen does not supply many dishes, nor high-seasoned incitements to eating. The house is not furnished with tables, cloths, nor napkins. The dishes are placed before them all at once, upon rushes and fresh grass, in large platters or

trenchers." The principal food was a sort of thin cake of bread, with chopped meat and broth. They were also very temperate in their drink. All the time the guests were eating the host and hostess stood up, "paying unremitting attention to everything, and taking no food till all the company are satisfied, that in case of any deficiency it may fall upon them." They also took great pains to amuse their visitors with witty conversation and jokes, to make them laugh. The archdeacon takes the trouble to tell us some of their jokes; but they, it must be owned, do not seem to have been quite as witty as he thought them. One of the best of them is how a person, "wishing to hint at the avaricious disposition of the mistress of a house, said, 'I only find fault with our hostess for putting too little butter to her salt.'" Fearing we may miss the point of this joke, he kindly explains it by adding the learned remark, "whereas the accessory should be put to the principal." There was also a kind of riddle about their little boats, which were so light that a strong salmon could overset one with his tail, and which the fisherman could carry on his shoulders. "There is amongst us a people who, when they go out in search of prey, carry their horses on their backs to the place of plunder; in order to catch their prey they leap upon their horses, and when it is taken carry their horses home again upon their shoulders."

15. But the chief glory of the Welsh was their poetry. Some of their songs were bright and joyous, full of love for beautiful things: for the mountains and the sea, the wild birds and the wild flowers, apple-blossoms and clover, and wood anemones, and for lovely maidens. But as they loved other things too, very different from these sweet and peaceful ones, they had also songs full of war and battle, and fierce love of country and liberty.

Poetry.

16. The Welsh had never ceased hating the English, or the "Saxons," as they called them (and call them to this day). They could never forget that the whole land used to belong to them, nor the cruelty of the heathen conquerors, who had driven them off into the wild region they still called their own. They had never left off

Hatred
of the
English.

hoping that some day all the Britons would rise again and drive the strangers away, back again to Germany. There were many strange old prophecies among them by poets of old, which had been handed down from father to son, and which said that their hero Arthur was not dead, but had been carried away into fairy-land to be hidden and healed, and that at the right time he

would come back and lead them all to victory. The principal of these old prophets was Merlin, of whom we read such wonderful tales in Tennyson's poetry. Just about this time everybody, both in England and Wales, and in other places too, was very full of the thought of King Arthur and the wizard Merlin, because of that charming 'History of England' mentioned before, which had been translated into English in the reign of King John, and which contained numbers of the old Welsh legends and fairy-tales, told as if they were all sober truth.

17. A large part of the book is taken up with Merlin's prophecies, which at that time were thought very wonderful; and the Welsh were just now in a high state of excitement, believing that they were about to be fulfilled. All through the reign of Henry III., when the English country was so busy with its own troubles and disputes, the Welsh were growing stronger and fiercer. They had a brave and clever prince named **Llewellyn**. One of the prophecies was that a prince of Wales should be crowned in London; and all the Welsh hoped that Llewellyn would be the one. He gained some great successes while Henry was still king, and the other smaller princes in Wales did homage to him.

18. He and his people could not endure the thought of his being a vassal to the King of England, and when Henry died, and Llewellyn was summoned to do homage to Edward, he would not come. He was sent for again and again; still he would not come. Edward's patience was worn out at last, and he marched into Wales with an army. Now though the Welsh were fiery and always ready to fight, they seem to have had very little perseverance. They were "very severe in the first attack, terrible by their clamour and looks, filling the air with horrid shouts, and the deep-toned clangour of very long trumpets. . . . Bold in the first onset, they cannot bear a repulse, they cannot struggle for the field of battle, or endure long and severe actions." "In their first attack they are more than men, in the second less than women."

19. Again, they were very faithless and untrue; they thought nothing of breaking their most solemn oaths and promises; so that when Edward set his mind in earnest to conquer Wales he had not much difficulty in doing so. The other lesser princes who had sworn to be faithful to Llewellyn broke their oaths and deserted him. Edward brought his armies and fleets near enough to hem him in among the desolate mountains of Snowdon, without venturing too far in among them himself, and he

had to beg for mercy. A sort of peace was made, and for four years it was kept. After that time the Welsh broke out again; there was some hard fighting, but the end of it was that Edward conquered, and Llewellyn was killed. His head was cut off, and it is said that Edward sent it to London, had it crowned with a wreath of willow, and set up on the Tower in a mocking fulfilment of the prophecy. Soon after this Llewellyn's brother David, the last of the royal family of Wales, was taken prisoner and most cruelly put to death. Thus Wales was subdued, and has ever since been looked on as part of the English kingdom, though the Welsh did not submit heartily, till after many years, in the course of events, a Welshman came to be King of England. 1282.
Conquest of Wales.

20. Edward used his conquest wisely. He treated the people well, he governed them justly and mercifully, and introduced many of the English customs and laws, which were better than their own; so that probably the Welsh were, in the end, a great deal better off for having been conquered.

21. It used to be said that Edward, seeing what a wonderful influence the poets had on the people by their warlike songs and prophecies, collected them all together and had them murdered. This was called "the massacre of the bards," and there is a very fine poem about it, beginning "Ruin seize thee, ruthless king," supposed to be spoken by the last of these poor Welsh bards. But, happily, the story is not true, and we need not think that our brave Edward was a "ruthless" or merciless king at all, although he sometimes had his enemies put to death. But in those days this was done by everybody.

22. It was soon after this time that the eldest son of the King of England was first called by the title of Prince of Wales. It was said that Edward, seeing how unwilling the proud Welsh were to submit to a foreign yoke, promised them that he would give them a prince of their own—born in Wales, and who could not speak one word of English. The Welsh being much pleased at this promise, he presented to them his own young son, who had been born a few days before in Carnarvon Castle, and who, if he could speak no English, could certainly speak no Welsh. The story is rather a good one, so we may hope it is true; but as it is not mentioned in any book written at the time, it is very doubtful. 1284.
The Prince of Wales."

23. But even if it were true, when the Welsh accepted this infant as their prince he was not the eldest son, for Edward had

already a son named Alphonso ; so they probably hoped that he would be the King of England, and that they would still have a separate prince of their own, though an Englishman. As it turned out, Alphonso died, and the young Edward of Carnarvon afterwards became King of England and Wales both. Thus Wales quite ceased to have a separate government ; for the title of Prince of Wales, still borne by the eldest son of the reigning sovereign, does not give the prince any power over Wales, which is as much under the queen and the parliament as any other part of Great Britain.

24. After this conquest, and before Edward turned his attention to Scotland, he performed an act which to us seems very harsh and cruel, though it was doubtless looked on both by himself and his subjects as most Christian and praiseworthy. This was, that he finally drove all the Jews out of the country. We have already seen how cruelly the Jews were treated ; how the

1290.
Banish-
ment of
the Jews.

kings extorted money out of them by all sorts of means, and how the people every now and then rose and massacred them. It was generally believed that they did many cruel and wicked things : that they stole Christian children and murdered them in secret, and that they tried to get mysterious poisons from foreign lands to poison all Christendom. Though the kings of England had, more or less, protected them from the time of William the Conqueror onward, as being in some sort their own property, their protection did not go far, and all sorts of hard and tyrannical laws were made against them. We may wonder why they chose to live in England at all, since they met with such bad usage ; but the fact was, that in other Christian countries they were far worse treated ; still more pillaged, and more massacred.

25. But now Edward and his people, in a kind of religious frenzy, ordered all the Jews out of the country. Edward, even now, did not mean to be cruel. He intended them to leave in safety, and, as some say, gave them permission to take their property with them. The people, however, treated the poor Jews most awfully in their flight ; and especially the sailors who carried them in their ships. Many of them were wrecked, others were robbed and flung overboard. One instance is given by an old chronicler, who says that he learnt it from a manuscript written at the time. "Some of the richest of the Jews, being shipped in a mighty tall ship which they had hired, when the same was under sail, and had got down the Thames towards the mouth of the river, the master mariner bethought him of a wile,

and caused his men to cast anchor, and so rode at the same, till the ship, by ebbing of the stream, remained on the dry sands. The master then enticed the Jews to walk out with him for recreation. And at length, when the Jews were on the sands, and he understood the tide to be coming in, he gat him back to the ship, whither he was drawn by a rope. The Jews made not so much haste, because they were not aware of the danger; but when they perceived how the matter stood they cried to the master for help. He, however, told them that they ought to cry rather upon Moses, by whose guidance their fathers had passed through the Red Sea. They cried indeed, but no succour appeared, and so they were swallowed up by the water."

26. Edward severely punished these barbarians; but it is to be feared that very few of the 16,000 Jews who were driven away reached the mainland in safety. It was about 350 years from this time before any Jews were allowed to come back, though now, as we know, as many as like live peaceably in England - some very rich, some very poor, but all protected by the laws and enjoying the same liberty, comfort, and safety as ourselves.

LECTURE XXV.—EDWARD I. SCOTLAND.

The inhabitants of Scotland. The old laws. Candidates for the crown. Edward claims the over-lordship. John Balliol. The first revolt. The first conquest. The stone of destiny.

1. WE must now see how Edward prospered in his designs upon Scotland. It is evident that, unless that country submitted of its own accord, it would not be so easy to conquer as Wales had been. Though much smaller than England, it was far larger, more powerful, and more civilized than Wales. The people also were very different. We saw that the Welsh, though **The people of Scotland.** brave and fond of fighting, had not much perseverance; they were easily cowed and daunted. There were a good many of the very same race in Scotland also, the Welsh of the northern part of Strathclyde, which by this time was part of Scotland; and if the whole country had been peopled by the same, perhaps England would, after a while, have subdued them all. But Scotland contained various other races of men as well. It contained men who were by birth English, Irish, and Normans, though they were now all called Scotchmen.

2. The real *Scots* were in fact Irish. In very old times Ireland, or part of Ireland, was called Scotia, and the Irish people were called Scots. A great many of these had crossed over the narrow sea which divides the two countries, and had settled in the northern part of what we now call Scotland. Here they found already a great many wild people living, who were most likely a family of Celts also, called Picts, and the Romans tell us what trouble these two wild sets of men gave them. It was to keep out the Picts and Scots that Agricola had built his great wall. When they were not fighting the Romans or the Britons, no doubt they spent most of their time in fighting each other; and in some way or other, it is not very clear how, the Scots got the upper hand of the Picts; a Scot king became king over them all, and the whole country north of the Forth and the Clyde was called Scotland. The people in this kingdom

were therefore nearly related to the Irish, and spoke almost the same language. The Highland Scotch still have a language of their own, called "Gaelic," but it is almost exactly like the native Irish language, and both Irish and Gaelic are more like Welsh than like English; they are all three Celtic dialects.

3. When our forefathers settled themselves in Britain they not only took possession of what is now called England, but of a good part of what we now call Scotland also. The old Anglian kingdom of Northumberland stretched all the way up from the Humber to Agricola's wall. Edwin, the first Northumbrian king who became a Christian, had built a strong fortress on the northern boundary of his dominions to keep out the wild Scots, which was called Edwin's borough, or Edinburgh. Thus all this part of Scotland, except to the west, where the Welsh lived, was part of England, and full of Englishmen; the very same people whose descendants live there now. As is well known, there is to this day a great difference between the two sets of Scotchmen, the Highlanders and the Lowlanders; the Highlanders being Celts, and speaking a Celtic language; and the Lowlanders, Anglo-Saxons, and speaking English, or a dialect of English. (The English language is now spreading through the whole country, and all educated Highlanders, and many of the poor also, speak it; but it can hardly be called their native tongue.)

4. After a time the Danes and Northmen came and took possession of the islands and northern parts of Scotland, and many of their descendants still live there. By degrees the Scotch kings got the mastery over more and more of the Lowlands, both of Northumberland and of Strathclyde, as far as to the river Tweed and the Solway Firth, and Edwin's borough became the capital of Scotland, which would doubtless have surprised Edwin very much.

5. After the Norman Conquest the Scotch king showed great kindness to the conquered English, and married the sister of Edgar the Etheling, who was so good that she was afterwards called St. Margaret. A great many of the English who were driven out of their possessions by the Normans took refuge in Scotland, and were kindly received. Not only that, but many Normans came there too, who were also kindly received. Some great Norman noblemen had large estates in Scotland, in England, and in France also; and it seems hard to say whether they were Scotchmen, Englishmen, or Frenchmen. Strangely enough, Robert Bruce, who is the very darling of the Scotch, and their type of a patriot, belonged to one of these families.

6. Thus, by the time at which we have now arrived, the kingdom of Scotland was in size and boundaries just what it is now; and though it contained all these different races of men, they all felt themselves, and were called, Scotchmen, and were much attached to their country. It was probably because there were so many of English race among them (who have the great quality of perseverance, and never know when they are beaten) that, instead of conquering Scotland, as he did Wales, Edward I. thoroughly lost even what he had at first.

7. It would have been much to our advantage if our friend the Archdeacon Gerald, who wrote such amusing and interesting accounts of Wales and Ireland, had travelled in Scotland also; but there does not seem to be any description of the country written at the time. Still we can learn something about the manners and habits of the people from their own old laws, as well as from the English or other writers, who saw them in England, even if they did not travel into Scotland to see them at home.

8. A great part of Scotland is very beautiful, full of mountains and lakes, and wild moors and heaths. This was the part where the wilder people, the Highlanders, lived. Many hundreds of years after this time they were still what we should call very uncivilized, and had many singular customs and ways. At this period even the Lowlands seem to have been far less civilized than England, though, at the same time, in some respects, Scotland was better off than England.

9. Some of the old laws of Scotland, which were at this time still looked on as the law of the land, though the nation had in

**The old
laws.**

reality quite outgrown them, make us think that they managed matters very oddly. We saw that in the old early English times a man's life was estimated in money. Any one who killed him had to pay a certain sum of money to his family, according to his rank. A king was worth so much, an earl so much, and a plain man so much. The Scotch in the old times reckoned the value of a man not in money, but in cows. The king was worth 1000 cows; a king's son, or an earl, 150. The lowest mentioned is forty-four cows, and a little money as well. Even this man must have been descended from a thane, so we do not know what the value of a plain man, or "churl," as the English would have called him, might be. After a time they left off paying in cows and substituted money instead; and in making all these arrangements the old Scotchmen thought they were making an improvement

on God's laws. They seemed to have forgotten the Sermon on the Mount, and what Christ had said on this subject, for in their old-fashioned language they take pains to point out the contrast.

"All laws outhir are manis lawe, or Goddis lawe." "By the law of God," they go on, "a head for a head, a hand for a hand, an eye for an eye, a foot for a foot. By the law of man, for the life of a man so many ky (or cows). For a foot a mark, for a hand as muckle, for an eye half a mark, for an ear as muckle, for a tooth twelve pennies," &c.

Another of the old laws says that if thieves had been plundering a monastery, the lord of that part of the country should help, and not hinder, the monks in trying to catch them; which looks as if the lords were rather inclined to make common cause with the robbers, and perhaps to get part of the booty.

10. The laws take great pains to help the poor who were robbed, by putting them under the special protection of the king. "It is ordanyt at all thai, the quhilkis are destitut of the help of al men . . . sal be under the proteccions of the lord the kyng." So the king's own people had to plead for the poor man, and if it was proved that a rich man had robbed a poor man, he not only had to restore the goods to the owner, but also to pay eight cows to the king. No doubt that last arrangement would make the king and his servants all the more zealous protectors of the poor and helpless.

11. The lowest people of all were serfs; but they do not seem to have been ever quite so low or such actual slaves as they were in England and other countries, for the difference between a thrall, or slave, and a churl **The serfs.** which was very well known in England, does not seem to have been very clear, and the serfs could very easily become free.

12. Again, two great grievances which came upon the English after the Norman Conquest were never known in Scotland at all. Those were the forest laws and the castles, which had caused such endless misery. Though there were some Norman noblemen in Scotland, they never had the power there that they had in England; they were rather visitors and friends than masters.

13. The country on the whole was free and fairly governed. They had thriving towns, kept in order by their own magistrates, and where there were no slaves or serfs at all. The **Houses.** houses seem to have been built of wood, as they were nearly everywhere at that time, except where the Jews had begun to build stone houses; but in country places, and especially

among the Highlanders, they made both houses and churches of that wattled work which we so often find wherever there were people of Celtic race. These houses were not nearly so uncomfortable as might be supposed, for the walls were made of a sort of double framework, with turf or earth piled in between, and were quite thick and substantial enough to keep out the wind and rain.

By the time of St. Margaret, in the reign of William the Conqueror, they began, like the English, to learn from the Normans to build beautiful churches and abbeys, though they were too wise to let them build castles.

14. Of course in the Highlands there could not be much agriculture. It is impossible to plough up the steep mountain sides, and corn will not grow on the wild moors ; **Agriculture** happily for us, who love to have our world beautiful **and food.** as well as productive. But in the Lowlands they were already pretty good farmers, though their implements would seem very clumsy to modern eyes. The ploughs were so heavy that they wanted twelve oxen to draw them ; six families would join together, each keeping two oxen, and owning one plough among them. The principal food of the poorer people was oat-cake, or coarse grey or brown bread ; but in the towns the richer people got white bread, and plenty of good meat. The butchers were ordered to keep good beef, mutton, and pork, and to show it in their windows to be seen of all men ; if they mismanaged the meat they were punished. The bakers had similar orders. " And quha that bakis brede to sell, aw nocht (ought not) for to hide it, but sett it in their wyndow, or in the mercat for to be opynly sauld." We do not know if the grocers and other tradesmen were as eccentric as the bakers and butchers in wishing to hide away their goods, but they certainly had some commerce with foreign parts, for they got pepper, ginger, almonds and raisins, rice and figs. They also traded in furs, and had beaver skins and sables.

15. On the whole they were a hardy race, who cared very little for luxuries, or what we should call comforts. They were excellent soldiers in their way. This is the account given of them not very long after by a chronicler, from whom we shall learn a great deal by and bye—Froissart, who saw them himself, at a time when they were invading England. He says, " They bring no carriages with them, on account of the mountains they have to pass in Northumberland ; neither do they carry with them any provisions of bread or wine, for their habits of sobriety

are such, in time of war, that they will live for a long time on flesh half sodden, without bread, and drink the river-water without wine. They have therefore no occasion for pots or pans, for they dress the flesh of their cattle in the skins after they have taken them off; and being sure to find plenty of them in the country which they invade, they carry none with them."

In a camp which the Scotch had just quitted, the same chronicler tells us that the English found, besides a quantity of dead cattle, "300 caldrons, made of leather, with the hair on the outside, which were hung on the fires, full of water and meat, ready for boiling." It appears that, at any rate when they were at war, and could steal other people's cattle, meat was the principal food, and bread or oat-cake was a sort of treat or luxury when they had too much meat. "Under the flap of his saddle," Froissart goes on, "each man carries a broad plate of metal; behind him a little bag of oatmeal. When they have eaten too much of the sodden flesh they set this plate over the fire, knead the meal with water, and when the plate is hot put a little of the paste upon it, and make a thin cake like a biscuit, which they eat to warm their stomachs. It is therefore no wonder that they perform a longer day's march than other soldiers."

Their horses were as hardy as themselves. The knights and squires were "well-mounted;" but the common men rode on "little hackneys, that are never tied up or dressed, but turned immediately after the day's march to pasture on the heath or in the fields."

16. Not long after he tells us how some French knights and barons came to Scotland as friends and allies; "but, all things considered," he says, "it was not right for so many of the French nobility to come to Scotland, for Scotland is a very poor country. Whenever the English make inroads into Scotland, they order their provisions to follow close at their backs if they wish to live, for nothing is to be had in that country without the greatest difficulty. The knights and barons of France, who had been at home accustomed to handsome houses, richly-ornamented apartments, and good soft beds, were by no means pleased at the poverty they had to encounter."

17. Edward was likely to find some difficulty in getting the upper hand of these bold and hardy people if it came to fighting. He resolved to try fair means first, or what he, perhaps, thought to be fair. To begin with, he certainly had some sort of right. The very dispute which arose in his time, or, at least, came to a head in his

The dispute
with Eng-
land.

time, is still going on among learned men, as to the rights and the wrongs of Edward's claims. We have seen that a part of what had once been England was now in Scotland. For that part the King of Scotland had to do homage to the King of England as his over-lord. Everybody agreed about that. But with regard to the rest of Scotland, there was a dispute. Edward declared that he was also over-lord of that. The Scotch would not agree to it, and this was what the war was about afterwards. It would take too long to explain what each party founded their opinion upon; but it may be fairly concluded that there was a good deal to be said on each side, and that both thought they were in the right.

18. Everything seemed to favour Edward at first. By a great many misfortunes the old royal family of Scotland died out; the last member of it was a little girl of three years old, the only grandchild of the last king. It was arranged that she should be married to King Edward's son, which would have settled everything peaceably; but as she, unfortunately, died, there was a great difficulty in finding out who ought to be king, since there were no children, grandchildren, nephews, or nieces of the last king left. They had to go back a long way to find any member of the royal family who had left any heirs. The last one who had done so was Earl David, brother to William the Lion, that King of Scotland who had been taken prisoner by the English on the day when Henry II. did penance for the murder of Becket, more than 100 years before. Unhappily for the country, Earl David had left a great many descendants, and no less than thirteen of them now came forward as claimants to the crown.

19. As has been already noticed, the rules concerning the succession to an inheritance were not as yet clearly settled, and there was a great difficulty in deciding between the rival candidates. The Scotch people, who do not seem to have had any idea of what Edward's secret purpose was, in their dilemma turned their thoughts to him, as one of the greatest and wisest kings of the time, and asked him to decide among the thirteen which had

the best right to be King of Scotland. But before
 1291. Edward I. would give a judgment on this matter he
 claims the over-lord-ship. demanded that everybody should acknowledge him
 as over-lord of the whole of Scotland. The nobility
 and clergy, apparently taken by surprise, and per-
 haps afraid of offending Edward, who had an army behind him

could not find anything to say against it. The common people, or community, gave no consent; nobody knows exactly what they did say, for Edward would not let their answer be heard, and they were not yet powerful enough in Scotland for any one to care much what they thought. Edward therefore felt satisfied, and proceeded to judge among the claimants, who were also made to acknowledge him as lord superior of the whole country.

20. It was soon found that of all the thirteen only two or three had anything like a fair claim. The two principal ones were both descended from daughters of Earl David, and their fathers were Norman noblemen, with estates in Scotland; one of them was named Balliol, and the other Bruce. Edward decided quite fairly between them; he said Balliol, who was descended from David's eldest daughter, had the best right, and was to be King of Scotland, though only a vassal king to himself.

21. This John Balliol belonged to a very rich and great family; he had estates both in Normandy, England, and Scotland. His father founded Balliol College at Oxford, but he himself seems to have been a very poor and feeble **John Balliol.** character. Indeed, both his friends and enemies agree in calling him a fool, and in the midst of all his difficulties he was said to be a "lamb among wolves." It was certain troubles would soon arise. Whatever Edward might say about the former kings of England having been over-lords of Scotland, which some of them certainly had been, he began to do things which none of them had done, and which the proud Scotch could not brook—not cruel or tyrannical things, for Edward meant Scotland to be well ruled, but things which offended the independent spirit of the people. The courts of law in Scotland were no longer supreme; if any one was not satisfied with the decisions the Scotch judges gave he might go to England, and let the English judges try the cause again, and what they said was to be obeyed. This was, of course, a great insult to the Scotch, and even the poor "lamb" or fool, John Balliol, protested against it. However, his over-lord soon stopped his mouth for that time.

22. The first affair was only an unimportant one, a dispute between a goldsmith of Berwick and a widow, about a small sum of money; but soon there was a very important case to be decided between some great lords, and one of **The Scotch are offended.** them appealed to the King of England. Upon this Edward actually summoned the King of Scotland to come to England, and appear before the English Parliament, to answer, as he said, for denying justice. Even the English historian seems

startled at this, and says, "This King of Scotland was obliged to stand at the bar like a private person, to answer the accusation." Imagine then what the proud Scotch people felt.

23. Just at this time Edward had got into a quarrel with the King of France, and the Scotch were summoned, as his vassals, to follow him to the war. This, again, was quite a new thing for an English king to demand, and we may be sure the Scotch were not going to obey. On the contrary, they and their King John made a treaty with the King of France, promising to help him fight the English. From this time onward, for several centuries, there was an alliance between France and Scotland, and both constantly helped each other against the English. The way the Scotch helped the French at this time, was by pouring over the border into Northumberland, and burning, ravaging, and plundering just as the Danes used to do.

24. Edward very soon gave up the French affair, and came to Scotland. The Scotch lords now made Balliol send Edward a writing, renouncing his allegiance, and saying that, in consequence of the outrages and insults he had received, he would no longer be his vassal, nor come to him when summoned. To which Edward replied, "Ha! the foolish felon! is he such a fool? If he will not come to us, we will go to him." And he did go, taking with him what was in those days a large army—30,000 foot-soldiers and 5000 mounted men-at-arms. He found

1296.

War.

very little difficulty in conquering the Scotch. He besieged and took the castle and town of Berwick, which is just on the borders. Afterwards there was another fight at Dunbar, and a siege of Edinburgh Castle; but that was all the resistance worth speaking of. It was a complete conquest.

Conquest of
Scotland.

All the country submitted. The poor puppet, John Balliol, was deposed. He had to appear before the conqueror in a most humiliating way, clothed in a mean dress, without royal robes or ornaments, and, instead of a sword, carrying in his hand a harmless white wand. He was then degraded from the kingdom and sent to England, where he was kept for a time in custody; but not long afterwards he was allowed to leave the country in peace, and go to his estates in France, where he lived quietly for the rest of his days.

25. Edward was no cruel tyrant; he had no wish to ill-use either Balliol or the Scotch, but he did fully mean to be master. He thoroughly frightened the people by allowing a most cruel massacre after the taking of Berwick, but when once the land had

submitted he showed himself merciful and just (only they did not want his mercy or his justice). He gave free pardon to all who had rebelled, as he called it, and he endeavoured to establish order and peace everywhere. But he took away from Scotland some things which the Scotch dearly prized.

26. The most important of these was a thing which, to look at, we might not think was worth much. In Edward the Confessor's chapel in Westminster Abbey are to be seen two ancient chairs, one of them especially being very old and worn. These are called the Coronation Chairs, and in one of them the King or Queen of England always sits to be crowned. If we look at the seat of that one we see a rough block of stone, not carved or sculptured, not beautiful marble, merely a rude block of common limestone. That stone Edward brought from Scotland, and the loss of it nearly broke the hearts of the Scotch. They tried again and again to get it back, but the Londoners would never give it up. We may suppose, therefore, that it had a value not of its own. And indeed it has a strange and poetical history, which makes us feel even now, as we look at it, that it is more precious than the choicest piece of new or polished marble. This stone was called in Scotland the Stone of Destiny, and on it all the Scottish sovereigns had sate to be crowned and consecrated. In all times, in the early history of almost all people, we hear of sacred stones. We often read in the Bible of stones being reared up as memorials of remarkable events. This was a sacred stone of the early Scotch people. They believed that it was the very stone which Jacob took for his pillow when he saw the ladder and the angels. They told how it had been carried from Bethel to Egypt, from Egypt to Spain, from Spain to Ireland, from Ireland to Scotland. It was a magical stone, and in old times it had done wonderful things. The hearts of the Scotch people clung to the sacred stone.

27. Edward took it away. He had already hung up in the Confessor's chapel the golden crown of the Welsh prince; now he placed there the royal stone of Scotland. The other things which Edward brought away from Scotland, even a precious fragment of the true cross, which was called the "Holy Rood," were afterwards given back to the Scotch. They tried and strove to get their precious stone back; but no, "the people of London would by no means whatever allow that to depart from themselves." There was an old prophecy in Scotland, that wherever the stone was the Scotch should be supreme; and when, 300 years after this time, a Scotch king sate upon it, and was crowned

King of England in Westminster Abbey, the Scotch had the pleasure of thinking the prophecy was fulfilled. When we look at that old stone, though we need not believe that Jacob's head ever lay upon it, when we try to think of the generations and generations of people who have gazed upon it with reverence—the wild Irish of old, the half wild and patriotic Scotch, the brave and serious English; of the sovereigns who have been enthroned on it, from the old savage times, when they still thought the stone would groan aloud if a false pretender sate upon it, down to our good Queen Victoria, we cannot help feeling, like the Scotch and the Londoners of old, that it is too precious a thing to be lightly parted with.

LECTURE XXVI.—SCOTLAND VICTORIOUS.

Wallace. Battle of Stirling Bridge. The second conquest. Battle of Falkirk. Robert Bruce. His coronation. Death of Edward I. Battle of Bannockburn.

1. WHILE Edward was in Scotland he made as many as possible of the great lords and bishops come forward and do homage to him again. The Scotch seem to have thought nothing of making and breaking oaths of this kind. Some little time afterwards the same ceremony was repeated, and, as Baker says, "it seems swearing of fealty was with the Scots but a ceremony without substance, as good as nothing; for this is now the third time they swore fealty to King Edward, yet all did not serve to make them loyal." When the king left Scotland he took a great many of the Scotch nobles with him, and the others who were left at home were carefully watched, lest they should incite the people to rebel; but after his return to England things did not go on very well. The English began to build castles and fortresses, and did many other things to offend and insult the Scotch. There was a great deal of strife, discontent, and confusion, and the Scotch people only wanted a spirited and clever leader to help them rise up against the foreign oppressors.

2. Though Edward had taken away or silenced all the natural heads of the people, such a leader soon made his appearance. His name was William Wallace; a name very dear to the Scotch to this day. Wallace was neither a great lord nor quite a man of the people. He was rather in the middle rank. An old ballad says "he was cummyn of Gentlemen."

"His Fadyr was a manly Knyght
His Modyre was a Lady brycht."

They say he was wonderfully tall and handsome, strong and brave. His terrible sword was fit for an archangel rather than for a man. He was, no doubt, a remarkably clever man also;

just the leader the Scotch needed. The English contrived to affront and insult him, and at last, when he had already been made very furious, they ended by burning down his house and killing his wife. Wallace now openly revolted, and soon collected a band of followers, with whom he began to harass the English. No one can help taking an interest in a man who is defending his native land against foreign oppressors, and though the English of those days thought him a "pestilent ruffian," a robber and marauder, we are all agreed now in sympathizing with him, and admiring him as a true hero and patriot. We have also another reason for admiring him, and for thinking he did (or at any rate greatly helped) a wonderful work, a greater work even than that of freeing his country would have been; a work which in the end has changed the whole face of Europe, and altered all modern history.

3. Up till this time, ever since the feudal system had been fully established, people had thought more of knights on horse-

Knights and foot-soldiers. back than of anything else. A knight, and his horse, and his armour could only be withstood by another knight with horse and armour. Both horse and

armour were very strong and very expensive; the knight himself was brave, skilful, and highly trained. A leader who had a great many of these knights was likely to conquer any one who had not so many. The rest of the army counted for almost nothing. Two or three such knights would scatter a whole troop of light-armed and inexperienced foot-soldiers. Thus the knights and the nobles grew prouder and prouder. We saw before how they came to call the poorer men who fought on foot "rascals," and that "no great account was made of them." The rich and the poor grew more and more divided; the rich were insolent, the poor were depressed and slavish.

4. Now Wallace, when he began to resist the English, had very few nobles or knights on his side; many who at first seemed inclined to take part with him soon fell away, and submitted to Edward again; almost all his people belonged to the peasantry. And the grand thing he did was to show that they *were* of some account, that they could stand up against the knights, and could conquer them in defence of their freedom. In other parts of the world, in Switzerland and in Flanders, and perhaps because they heard what Wallace and his men had done, the lower orders—the burghers and the peasants—began to find they could hold their own against the barons and knights. By degrees the rich grew less proud; the poor grew more bold; till they began to

feel what we hope they are still learning more perfectly, that love, and trust, and mutual help are better than disdain, and fear, and hatred.

5. Edward sent an army under the Earl of Surrey to stamp out the disturbances. Wallace met them at Stirling Bridge, the principal way of getting from the south to the north ; he determined to stop the English there. The English had 1000 men on horseback, the Scotch only 180. The foot-soldiers were more nearly equal, but the English had more of them than the Scotch. Still Wallace entirely conquered the English ; the Earl of Surrey fled ; and the Scotch, taking arms on all sides, seized on a great many castles and fortresses, and drove almost all the English out of the country. This great victory was a wonderful encouragement to the Scotch people ; they were vanquished themselves many times afterwards, and had great troubles, but they never forgot that the proud English had been beaten once, and might be beaten again.

1297.
Battle of
Stirling
Bridge.

6. Edward now determined to come to Scotland again himself, and put the rebellion down. This time he brought a magnificent army with him, no less than 7000 of those terrible mounted men-at-arms, besides a great many men on foot armed in various ways. Wallace, who was not only a brave soldier, but a clever general, did not mean to fight a battle with this formidable army. His plan was to starve them out. Scotland being a poor country to begin with, it would always be difficult for a large foreign army to get food. But Wallace (and those who came after him followed his example) turned it into a wilderness. The people who lived in the southern counties of Scotland, as the war went on, got into the habit of this. As soon as an army was coming they all cleared out, not leaving one man behind, and hastened away to the north ; they took with them everything they had, and that was not much, and left a bare waste for the enemy to march through. They used to build poor little huts of turf and loose stones, which could easily be put up again when they came back, if the enemy had knocked them over.

7. This must have been a very miserable kind of life ; but the Scotch revenged themselves on the English whenever they could by coming in their turn into the northern counties of England, stealing the cattle and anything else they could find, burning the houses, and killing the people. Not long after this time the inhabitants of these parts were found to be so poor, in consequence of the ravages of the Scotch, that more than sixty towns

and villages were excused from paying any taxes. This was just in the same part which William the Conqueror had laid waste 300 years before. It is difficult to realize such things as having happened in our own peaceful, happy country.

8. Wallace then with his army, which was very small compared with Edward's, hung about in concealment, intending, as soon as want of food drove the English to retreat, to come after them, harassing and doing them all the mischief he could. But

1298.
Battle of
Falkirk.

the plan failed. It is said that two Scotchmen, who knew where Wallace was, made it known to Edward. Of course he, with his great army, wanted nothing better. They marched straight to the spot, which was near Falkirk, and the two armies confronted one another.

9. Edward was the very general a soldier loves. He was not what they used to call a "carpet knight;" one who showed to great advantage in bowers and halls, tournaments and games, but not so gallant in real fights and hardships. When Edward went to war he bore all that the meanest soldier had to bear. He would not drink wine when the others were thirsty and could get none. When they had to sleep on the bare ground he lay down and slept on it too. He was not above wheeling a barrow with the rest when they were fortifying Berwick. No doubt his presence inspired his men with hope and enthusiasm.

10. The two armies were a great contrast to one another. The English one must have been very beautiful to look at. The lords

The
two armies.

and knights were splendidly armed. The armour was beautifully enamelled and chased, and "looked as radiant and as delicate as the plumage of a tropical bird." It was not only bright, but richly coloured with blue and scarlet and gold. So were the shields and banners. Even the saddles and bridles of the horses were embroidered and set thick with gems. Each lord and knight had his own special banner, with his crest or badge upon it, by which every one knew him. One would have a falcon, one a lion, one a swan, and so on, which he carried on his shield, and helmet, and flag, so that in the confusion of a battle the leaders would be recognized even when their faces were hidden. From a distance, too, their flags would always be known. Besides his large banner, a nobleman would have a great many smaller flags, called pennons, each with the same badge on it (we read of one famous knight who had 1200 pennons under him), and these would all be flying and fluttering in the breeze. Froissart is often breaking

out in admiration at the sight of a fine army. "It was a beautiful sight to view these battalions, with their brilliant armour glittering with the sunbeams. . . . It was delightful to see and examine these banners and pennons, with the noble army that was under them. . . . It was a fine sight to see the banners and pennons flying, the barbed horses, the knights and squires richly armed." King Edward had on his banner three leopards "of fine gold, set in red, fierce, haughty, and cruel."

11. Wallace's army must have been very different to look at. He had very few of the gay, glittering knights; almost all his army were on foot. But he made so wise an arrangement of these plain but resolute foot-soldiers that he very nearly won the battle. He placed them in solid masses of men very close together, each supporting the other; the outer ones knelt down, holding their lances forward; within the squares were his archers. When the horsemen came galloping up it was like dashing against a wall of spears, as firm as a rock; nothing made them stir. The knights would have been quite helpless against these despised foot-soldiers had not Edward brought with him a body of Englishmen who were growing very famous now, the archers or bowmen. At this time there were no guns or cannon, so that most of the fighting had to be hand-to-hand, except what could be done with bows and arrows. The English were better archers than any other people; they could take wonderfully good aim, and could handle larger and stronger bows than other nations, so they could send their arrows farther. Had it not been for the archers, most likely Wallace's brave foot-soldiers would have won this battle, as they did that of Stirling; but when Edward saw what was happening, and made his archers come to the front, it was all over. The solid clumps of men were broken up by the arrows pouring in upon them from a distance; then the horsemen could ride in among them and cut them down as they pleased. Even the lords and knights whom Wallace had on his side did not come forward to help their countrymen, but fled away. Some people said this was because the nobles were jealous of Wallace, and did not like to be under him, since he was not a noble himself; but it may have been only because they were few in number, and had not such good arms and strong horses as the English.

12. Thus the English won the battle, and the Scotch army was broken up. Wallace had great difficulty in escaping and hiding himself. Still the Scotch did not give in. The nobles now tried to make head against the English; but perhaps they

were none of them so clever as Wallace; and they had to yield at last. Edward was moderate and merciful. When they submitted he forgave them all, only putting a very slight punishment on them. He might very likely have forgiven Wallace too if he would have submitted. He was far too high-spirited for that; he kept himself in hiding; but he was caught at last, taken prisoner to London, tried, condemned, and executed.

13. Edward probably thought all would go well now that the hero was dead; the Scotch had no leader, and their spirit would be broken and cowed. He began to make arrangements for governing the country, and uniting it to England. He meant to be a good and equitable ruler; he gave the Scotch good laws, just such as the English had, and did away with some of those curious and old-fashioned ones which were not quite fit for a civilized people. He also promoted many of the Scotch nobles and bishops to places of honour and trust.

14. But it would not do; the people had been thoroughly roused, and their defeats had not broken their spirit at all.

Very soon they got the leader they wanted—a man as brave and clever as Wallace, and a man too whom none of the proudest of the nobles could object to serve under, since he was one of their own royal family, with a good claim to be king of Scotland. When Edward had been called on to decide between the claimants to the crown there were two principal ones who seemed to have the best right, Bruce and Balliol. Balliol had had his turn, and Bruce was dead, but he had left a grandson behind him, Robert *the Bruce*, as he is called.

15. Edward I. brought up this young man in his court, and it is said that at different times he fought against the Scotch, and took part with the English. But he was uneasy under it; he was not very likely to forget that his grandfather had had the next right to be king of Scotland, and that he was his grandfather's heir. If Scotland should ever have a king of her own again, now that Balliol was out of the way, why should not he be that king? There was only one other man alive who had as good a claim as he had—a man who was called the Red Comyn, and who was a sort of cousin to both Bruce and Balliol.

16. Edward watched young Bruce narrowly. But one fine morning, not six months after Wallace's death, Robert Bruce was missed from the English court. There had been some words between him and King Edward. There had been some

more words dropped by Edward when Bruce was not by, which made his friends think he was in danger. No one dared speak, but Bruce received a present from a friend—a present of a sum of money and a pair of spurs. He was quick enough to guess what that meant. He lost no time. Before morning he, with only two followers, was far on his way to Scotland. There was snow lying on the ground, and he feared he might be traced and followed by the marks of the horses' feet, so he ordered the three horses to be shod with the shoes hind-side before, which made all the footprints look as if they were those of horses on their way into the town. He got safe away, and never stopped till he reached Scotland.

17. Now, then, here was a man of the royal blood, whom the greatest nobleman would be proud to follow, ready to take the lead and free his country. Never was a man more fitted for the task. Like Wallace, he was tall, strong, and handsome; like him, too, he was clever and full of ideas. That little plan about shoeing the horses showed he would be ready with schemes for any emergency, and was not a mere man of routine. He was always cheerful, hopeful, and good-humoured; kind and considerate to women and to those weaker than himself; he had been well educated, and could both read and write, which was rather a rare thing for a gentleman in those days. He was as good a knight as the best, for Edward had trained him up in all the rules of chivalry; but when necessary he could leave horse and heavy armour behind, and live like a wild mountaineer, hiding himself in dens and caves, or on the rough heath-covered hills.

18. Almost directly he arrived in Scotland he fell in with his cousin, and possible rival, the Red Comyn. They had a stormy interview in a church, from which Bruce presently emerged pale and agitated. "I doubt I have slain the Red Comyn," he said to his friends who waited outside. "Dost thou leave such a matter in doubt?" said one of them; "I will make sicker" (or sure). And rushing into the church, he did indeed make sure that his master's rival, whom he found wounded and helpless, should never trouble him more.

19. This was a terrible beginning of Bruce's exploits in his native land. He not only drew upon himself the vengeance of all Comyn's relations, and the resentment of the English king, but, from the murder having been committed in a church, he likewise incurred the wrath of the clergy and the Pope, and was excommunicated. In a sort of defiance of everybody, he at

1306.
His coronation.

once claimed the throne of Scotland, and was indeed crowned king. It must have been a dreary ceremony. Very few friends or attendants were present to do him honour; the sacred stone was gone; the nobleman whose right and duty it was to set the crown on his head refused to come. But his sister, the Countess of Buchan, a brave and loyal lady, without either his consent or her husband's, came to take his place. Edward was so enraged that, forgetting all his chivalry, he afterwards punished this poor lady by shutting her up in a den or cage like a wild beast's, in Berwick Castle.

20. For a time everything went ill with Bruce, and he was at last reduced to hide himself in the mountains of the Highlands, as Alfred had done in the marshes of Somersetshire. But he never lost heart nor courage. He had a faithful band of friends, who trusted and loved him with all their hearts. All sorts of romantic stories are told of their adventures; how they were hunted about with bloodhounds; how Bruce stood single-handed against whole armies, daunting them by his kingly bearing and terrible right arm; how they waded streams and lurked in caves, and could never be caught; how Bruce kept up the spirits of his comrades by reading aloud to them as they crossed great lakes in wretched boats. All these stories are delightfully told by Walter Scott in 'Tales of a Grandfather.' But none of them were written down till after Bruce was dead, and which of them are true and which are only fables, no one can tell now.

21. How was it all going to end? As long as Edward lived no one could say who would conquer, he or Bruce. But he was old now, his end was drawing near. He roused himself to make one more effort to realize the great desire of his life, and started once again for Scotland. But before he could set foot in

1307.
Death of
Edward I.

the country, though he was within three miles of it, worn out by the fatigues of the journey, he died at a place called Burgh-on-the-Sands, on one side of the Solway Firth. There he gave his dying commands to his son. One of them was that his heart should be carried to the Holy Land, where he had been on the Crusade in his young days with Eleanor; but his bones were to be wrapped in a bull's hide and carried forward at the head of his army until Scotland was subdued. He seems to have thought that the mere sight of his bones would terrify the Scotch, whom he had so often conquered. This command, though a harsh and vindictive one, did not seem quite so strange in those days as it does to us. It

was the custom then to think a great deal of what became of a man's body after he was dead. Bruce himself afterwards wished his heart to be carried to the Holy Land. When Richard I. died he had ordered his body to be divided into parts, and buried in different places: his heart was carried to the city of Rouen, which had always been faithful to him, and which he loved; his body was laid at his father's feet in token of submission and duty; and the "more ignoble parts" were buried among his rebellious subjects at Poitou. So that a man's burial was a kind of symbol or token of his last feelings and thoughts. Edward, whose dying effort had been to conquer the Scotch, wished his bones still to carry on the work.

But none of this was done. They carried his body back from the Solway Sands, and for sixteen weeks it lay at Waltham Abbey, by the grave of Harold, the last of the old English kings. Then it was conveyed to Westminster, and buried near his father. His tomb is not beautiful, like some of the others; it looks almost like "a sepulchre hewn out of a rock," and on it is carved in Latin "This is the hammer of the Scotch people."

22. As soon as Edward was dead it seemed as if all his work in Scotland fell to pieces. He was succeeded by his son Edward, the same who had been born at Carnarvon Castle, and was the first English Prince of Wales. Edward II. was a poor, weak, idle fellow, not at all like his father, not at all fit to cope with Bruce. He marched a little way into Scotland, but did nothing of any importance, and then turned back again into England.

23. More and more of the Scotch nobles and people now gathered round Bruce, and he pressed harder and harder upon the English. His principal helpers were his brother Edward, his nephew Randolph, and his friend Lord James of Douglas. All of these vied with each other in great deeds, and were constantly striving who could gain most favour and glory in the eyes of the king and the nation by their valiant acts and successes against the English. At last they had done so much that the English had no place of any importance left to them but Stirling Castle, and that was closely besieged by the Scotch.

**Stirling
Castle.**

24. The English felt that they must now make a great effort to save that fortress, and win back their lost ground. Edward II. therefore marched into Scotland himself, at the head of a great army. It consisted of fully 100,000 men, and was beautiful and terrible to look upon, with its splendidly-armed knights and horses, and its countless banners and pennons.

Bruce had not half the number, but then he was a host in himself. It might be said of him, as Napoleon said when he saw the Duke of Wellington walking up a hill, "There go 20,000 men." He had too his brave Randolph and Douglas at his side.

25. They met near Stirling Castle, by the side of a brook called Bannockburn. Randolph was set to watch against any

1314.
Battle of
Bannock-
burn.

of the English army entering Stirling Castle, which they were come to relieve. By some mischance a troop of English cavalry very nearly made their way in before Randolph perceived them. "See, Randolph," said the king, "a rose has fallen from your chaplet."

Randolph hastened to retrieve his fault; he rushed off with his men to stop the English before it was too late. He had but foot-soldiers to oppose the English horse, and not half so many even of them. Douglas, his friend and rival, saw that he was hard pressed, and rode after with his followers to assist him. But long before they reached the spot Randolph and his infantry had driven off the English, and when Douglas saw the horses, many of them riderless, fleeing away, he called on his men to stop; for, said he, "Randolph has gained the day; since we were not soon enough to help him in the battle, do not let us lessen his glory by approaching the field." This was the true magnanimity of a noble knight.

26. Every one in Bruce's army seemed to have the heart of a hero, and in spite of all the mighty English horsemen, and the far-famed English archers, the Scotch won a triumphant victory. Never before or since have the English been so utterly defeated. The king fled for his life, and escaped safely to England. Those of the English who would not flee, and there were a great many of them, were left dead on the field, or were taken prisoners.

27. After this great victory Bruce's success was complete. The English could never recover from it, and were scarcely able to defend even their own border. The Scotch made

1328.
Peace of
North-
ampton.

inroads into England, and defeated them on their own ground. At last a treaty was signed at Northampton, fully acknowledging the independence of Scotland and her king. This was the very year before Robert Bruce died; a rich reward to him, and precious fruit of all his toils. He left a glorious name behind him, which is as dear, and deserves to be as dear, almost, to the Scotch nation as that of Alfred is to the English.

LECTURE XXVII.—CIVIL WAR AND FOREIGN WAR.

Edward II. His father's last commands. Piers Gaveston. The Lords Ordainers. The Despensers. The queen. Deposition of Edward. His murder. Edward III. The French wars. Froissart. The Black Prince. Battle of Crecy. Calais.

1. We have seen how Edward II. lost all that his father had gained in Scotland. The rest of his reign was quite of a piece with this. We need not blame him for not obeying that order of his father's respecting his bones, which 1307. Edward II. had a cruel and unchristian sound ; but he also disobeyed another of his dying commands which he undoubtedly ought to have kept. This was that he should send away a special friend and favourite of his, who, as the old king saw, would be likely to give him bad advice and to bring him into trouble. The favourite was a young Frenchman named Piers Gaveston, who had been brought up with him, and to whom he was deeply attached, but whom the Gaveston. English nobles soon began to hate as deeply. It seems only human nature that they should have done so. Gaveston was quick, brilliant, and frivolous. He came from Gascony, a part of France which was noted for its inhabitants being vain and self-confident ; so much so, indeed, that the terms gasconade, gasconading, have become English words meaning boasting and bragging ; just the very sort of thing which is most hateful to a proud, solid Englishman. Accordingly, he soon made himself quite detestable to them.

2. He was very accomplished, very skilful in tournaments and in all the things which make a show ; he was also very elegant and choice in his dress. He wore beautiful flowered shirts, and embroidered girdles, and was extremely good-looking. In all things he seemed to outshine the nobles of the land. He managed to win all the prizes at the tournaments, and threw a good many of the English lords off their horses. We can fancy it was not very pleasant to them to see themselves eclipsed in this way by an

upstart foreigner ; and if Gaveston had had any sense or modesty he would have kept more in the background, and not been always showing himself off.

3. But the king was as foolish as he was himself. He seemed to lay himself out to affront the English nobles. At his coronation he put Gaveston above all of them ; he made him carry the crown, and walk next to himself and the queen. Not content with empty honours, he gave him great riches, both in lands and money. He made him Earl of Cornwall, which before that had always been a title belonging to a prince of the royal family, and he married him to his own niece.

4. As soon as the parliament met, after the new king had been crowned, the very first thing they did was to demand that Gaveston should be banished. Edward was obliged to give in, and indeed took most solemn oaths that he would never let him come back. But we know oaths did not count for much at that time ; and in very little more than a year Gaveston was back again, in high feather. Neither he nor the king had learnt any wisdom. The king made as much of him as ever. He, on his part, affronted the nobles even worse than before. He gave some of them insulting nicknames. The king's own cousin, the Earl of Lancaster, who took part with the lords, he called "an old hog." The Earl of Pembroke he called "Joseph the Jew." We can hardly say, in those days, when every one so hated and despised the Jews, which would be thought the worst, to be called a "hog" or a "Jew." The Earl of Warwick he called "a black dog."

5. The foolish king thought all this very witty, and fine fun. But the nobles did not think it fun. The Earl of Warwick vowed a terrible vow that some day Gaveston should "feel the black dog's teeth." A more important person still was affronted, the queen herself. Edward was married to Isabella, the daughter of the King of France. She was very beautiful, and indeed was said to be the most beautiful woman in the world ; but there was not much love between her and her husband even to begin with. She soon became disgusted at Edward's devotion to his favourite, and never, to the end of his life, did she forgive him.

6. All this time Edward was constantly in want of money, which of course gave the lords and the country great power over him. It was thoroughly well settled now that the **Resistance.** king could get no money without the consent of parliament, and the parliament would never give him any money when he was doing things which offended them. Gaveston had to go away before the barons would even come to parliament at

all. Thus we see what good came of Stephen Langton, and the barons' charter, of Simon de Montfort's work, of Humphrey de Bohun's resistance, when he would "neither go nor hang." There was a bad, or, at least, a weak and foolish king now; but he could not govern according to his own will, for there was a way of keeping him in order. We begin to see now the difference between a constitutional king, that is, a king who has to rule according to the settled laws of the nation, and an absolute king, who rules according to his own will. But poor, foolish Edward could not see it. He wanted to have all his own way. The lords were determined to have theirs; they appointed a sort of committee to govern the country, and took all the power, for a time, out of the king's hands.

1310.
The Lords
Ordainers.

7. The members of this committee or council were called Lords Ordainers, and they made a great many regulations or ordinances intended to keep the king in order, to make his power less, and the power of the parliament greater. The king promised to agree to all this, but he could not do without his favourite. There seemed no way of getting rid of him but one; the lords took up arms, and a civil war began. Gaveston was caught at last, and the great nobles whom he had insulted and ridiculed had their revenge. He was carried off to Warwick Castle; the Earl of Warwick, the "black dog," had his opportunity now of showing his teeth, and Gaveston, without any trial, without any pity, was beheaded.

8. It might have been thought the king had had a lesson now, and would have tried to please and content the lords and the people. Still more so, considering the state of things in Scotland. It was just at this time that Bruce was making such progress, and had got back all the fortresses but one, and when Edward was obliged to go to Scotland to try and save that one. Many of the nobles, and above all, his cousin, the Earl of Lancaster, would not go with him or bring their followers; and it was, perhaps, partly owing to that that he was so disgracefully beaten at Bannockburn.

9. Nevertheless, it was not long before he set up a new favourite. This time it was an Englishman and a nobleman, one Hugh le Despenser, "in all points just such another" (as Gaveston), "equal to him in goodness of personage, in favour of the king, and in abusing the lords." Again the king heaped riches and honours so recklessly on him and on his father as to offend all the other nobles. They were both as greedy and covetous, as arrogant and overbearing, as

The new
favourite.

Gaveston had been, and it was all the same thing over again. The king and his party got the better at one time, and the head of the nobles, Edward's cousin, the Earl of Lancaster, was beheaded; so were some of the others, and one of the most important, Roger Mortimer, was imprisoned, but contrived to escape.

10. But things went on no better. Hugh le Despenser and his father contrived to make themselves utterly hated and detested by everybody, and from hating the favourites people soon passed to hating the king. **The queen and Mortimer.** Queen Isabella entirely turned against him now, and took part with his enemies. Her brother, the King of France, began to quarrel with Edward, and Isabella went over to France, as was said, in order to make peace. She soon sent for her eldest son to join her, and then she would not come back. She gave out that she dared not come for fear of Hugh and his father. But, in reality, she had fallen in with that Roger Mortimer who had escaped from his prison, and she and he were joining together to plot against the king. The barons in England sent messages, telling her that if she could collect about 1000 soldiers, and would bring her young son back to England, they would join her, and make him king instead of his father. Though her brother, the King of France, would not take her part, at least openly, she found a very good friend in Sir John de Hainault, whose niece the young Edward afterwards married, and the Princess Philippa turned out as good and faithful a wife as his grandfather's dear Eleanor. Queen Isabella then returned to England, accompanied by her son and Sir John de Hainault, and bringing with her an army of foreign soldiers. She publicly proclaimed that she was come to avenge the death of the Earl of Lancaster, and as the enemy of the Despensers.

11. The lords and bishops joined her at once; there was hardly any one to take the king's part. He had to flee; but he and his friend the younger le Despenser were taken prisoners in Glamorganshire. Hugh Le Despenser was hung on a gibbet fifty feet high, and wearing a crown of nettles; his father was also captured and put to death. But what was to be done with the king? He had no friends left. The people were told shameful and false stories about him: that he had deserted his wife; that he was an idiot and a changeling; it was given out that he was a carter's son, changed in his infancy by his nurse. It was almost an unheard-of thing to dethrone a king; and perhaps that was the reason why this story was set afloat; since, though there were abundance of other charges which could be proved

against him, they might not have been sufficient to convince the common people of the lawfulness of deposing him.

12. Parliament was summoned. To them it was said, and most of this was quite true, that Edward was not fit to govern; that he did not know good from evil; that he followed bad counsellors, and would not follow good ones; that he spent his time in idle amusements, instead of trying to do good to his people; that he had lost a great part of his dominions abroad and in Scotland; that not only had he done no good, but he had done great harm, by putting to death many of the great men of the country; that he had broken his coronation oath of doing justice to all; and, lastly, that he was incorrigible, and would never do any better.

13. Nobody wanted to keep a king like this. He was made to resign his kingdom, and to consent to his son Edward being put in his place. If it had stopped here, and he had been well treated in a private position, he would have had no more than he deserved, and the country would have been plainly right in getting rid of a king so unfit to be at its head. But only eight months after he was cruelly murdered; it was believed by the orders of the queen and Mortimer, who now took all the power into their own hands, for the new young king was but a boy of fourteen years old.

1327.
The king
deposed.

His death.

14. For a time it seemed as if affairs were to go on as badly as ever. Mortimer soon showed himself as insolent and covetous as either Gaveston or Hugh le Despenser. No one, of course, could feel any respect for the queen, who had deserted her husband for his sake. They both fell into great disfavour with all the nation; more especially because it was by them that the peace with Robert Bruce was made, giving up all for which Edward I. had fought, and acknowledging the entire independence of Scotland, which was very galling to the English pride.

1328.

15. Meanwhile, the young Edward was growing up, and growing up very brave, ambitious, and spirited. When he was eighteen he would no longer submit to be kept in subjection by his mother and her worthless lover, and by a bold and skilful surprise he seized on Mortimer in Nottingham Castle, and assumed the government himself. Mortimer was tried, condemned, and executed; and Queen Isabella spent the rest of her days, in a sort of honourable imprisonment, in a house of her own near London.

Edward III.

16. "It is a common opinion in England that between two valiant kings there is always one weak in mind and body ; and most true it is that this is apparent in the example of the gallant King Edward, of whom I am now to speak ; for his father, King Edward II., was weak, unwise, and cowardly ; while his grandfather, called the good King Edward, was wise, brave, very enterprising, and fortunate in war." So writes Froissart, the

Froissart. delightful chronicler, who tells us most about the long reign we are now entering upon, and of whom we have already heard. He was a foreigner, secretary to Philippa of Hainault, the wife of Edward III. He lived in England a considerable time, but travelled about also in France and other places, where there were knights and battles. We learn more about "chivalry" from him than from anybody else ; for though he was a priest and a scholar himself, knightly deeds, glory, and fame were the very joy of his soul. The intense delight he takes in telling his stories, his great love for noble acts, his admiration for brave and gallant knights, make his book very charming reading. He took pains to find out the truth as far as he could (though he sometimes made mistakes nevertheless). He evidently found the greatest possible pleasure in writing his book ; indeed, he says, towards the end of it, that, "through the grace of God," he shall work upon it as long as he lives. "For the more I labour at it, the more it delights me ; just as a gallant knight who loves his profession, the longer he continues in it, so much the more delectable it appears." He was quite certain, too, that his book would be a very interesting one ; and a favourite, he thinks, with all good people. He says he well knows that when he is dead and gone "this grand and noble history will be in much fashion, and all noble and valiant persons will take pleasure in it." It is about 500 years since this book was written, and his words have so far come true that it is still a very favourite and attractive book ; and we of the nineteenth century can now take almost as much pleasure in it as the "noble and valiant persons" for whom he wrote it.

English people generally take pride and delight in reading and hearing of the reign of Edward III., because of the famous battles in which they beat the French, and of which Froissart gives such animated descriptions, that, however much we may hate war and battles, we cannot help enjoying these.

17. But besides the fighting, and the glory, and the gallantry, there were sore troubles too which came upon England and Europe in this reign. Twice over there was a most dreadful pestilence,

more dreadful almost than any other of which we hear in history ; but we all think so much more of what makes a fine show, so much more of pride and glory, than of quiet happiness, that in half the histories written of this time, as in Froissart's own, we scarcely find a line or two about this plague, though we find pages and pages about wars and victories.

18. In the great war with France which Edward carried on the tables are quite turned. Instead of Frenchmen wanting to conquer England, and a French prince wanting to be king of England, now it is the English who want to conquer France, and Edward claims to be its king.

**War with
France.**

As to his claim, volumes have been written on both sides. It is only another proof of what we have seen so often, that in those days the laws by which princes succeeded to kingdoms were very unsettled, and when there were two or three different claimants, each of whom seemed to have some right on his side, it generally got decided by their fighting it out. Edward's mother, the beautiful but wicked Isabella, was daughter of a king of France, and it was through her that Edward made his claim.

19. This was the beginning of a war between France and England, which was called the Hundred Years' War ; because, though they were not literally fighting all that time, there was never any lasting or settled peace. England got great glory, but she did not get France. At the end of that long war she lost every part of France she had ever possessed except one town, and that she lost some time afterwards. We have learnt to see now that it is much better for us both that England should be for the English, and France for the French. And it is enough to make us grieve when we think of the thousands and thousands of brave men (as well as brave horses) who were killed, and of the many more thousands of women whose hearts were broken or lives made bitter by these famous wars. But when we are reading Froissart we half forget to think of that.

20. The grand hero of this time, the very crown and flower of chivalry, was the young Prince of Wales, Edward III.'s eldest son. His name was also Edward, though he is nearly always called the Black Prince. Froissart, however, never calls him so ; and no one knows exactly how he got that title, whether from wearing black armour or from his terrible deeds. Before his first battle his father dressed him in black armour, but it is not likely he often wore it. Much more probably he was generally clothed in rich

**The Black
Prince.**

and beautiful colours. He never lived to be king of England, and was buried at Canterbury Cathedral. There his tomb, with his likeness on it, may be seen to this day. It is faded now, after these 500 years, but when it was new it was glowing with colours. On the armour may still be seen marks of the gilding with which it was covered; above it hangs his helmet, with the gilded leopard for its crest; his velvet coat, which was embroidered with blue and scarlet; his shield, emblazoned with the arms of England and of France. He must have been a splendid sight to see.

21. He was very young, only sixteen years old, when he first fought the French. He had only been made a knight about a month. He had not yet "won his spurs;" that is, he had not yet done anything to distinguish himself as a knight, and to make him worthy of the gilded spurs which knights wore. He first fought in the famous battle of Crecy, not very far from Abbeville, in France. It is sometimes said that Roger Bacon's gunpowder came into use now, and that cannon were first used in this battle, but Froissart says nothing about it. There is no doubt, however, that it began to be employed about this time.

1346.
Battle of
Crecy.

22. Froissart says that in this battle the King of England had not more than an eighth part of the forces which the King of France had, but they were fine soldiers, and excellently disciplined. There were more than 5000 of the far-famed English archers. The King of France, however, had 15,000 Genoese with their cross-bows, on whom he depended a great deal, besides immense numbers of Frenchmen, all eager for the fight. But Froissart tells us that "no man, unless he had been present, can describe truly the confusion of that day, especially the bad management and disorder of the French, whose troops were out of number."

Before the battle began Edward "rode at a foot's pace through all the ranks, encouraging the army, and entreating that they would guard his honour, and defend his right; so sweetly and with such a cheerful countenance did he speak that all who had been before dispirited were directly comforted by hearing him."

23. The young Prince of Wales, surrounded by many gallant knights, had command of the first battalion. When all were duly arranged the English army "seated themselves on the ground, with their helmets and bows before them, that they might be the fresher when their enemies should arrive." The king over-looked all from a little hill near.

24. Before long the great and tumultuous French army approached, longing for the battle, but obeying no commands, and keeping no order. "As soon as the King of France came in sight of the English his blood began to boil," and he ordered the Genoese bowmen forward. "During this time," says Froissart, "a heavy rain fell, accompanied by thunder, and a very terrible eclipse of the sun; and before this rain a great flight of crows hovered in the air, over all those battalions, making a loud noise. Shortly afterwards it cleared up, and the sun shone very bright, but the French had it in their faces, and the English in their backs."

25. Now came the meeting of the impulsive, excitable Italians with the dogged, undemonstrative English. "When the Genoese were assembled together, and began to approach, they made a great leap and cry to abash the Englishmen, but they stood still and stirred not for all that. Then the Genoese a second time made another leap and a fell cry, and stepped forward a little, and the Englishmen removed not one foot; thirdly, again they leaped and cried, and went forth till they came within shot; then they shot fiercely with their cross-bows. Then the English archers stepped forth one pace, and let their arrows fly so hotly and so thick that it seemed snow. When the Genoese felt the arrows piercing through heads, arms, and breasts, many of them cast down their cross-bows, and did cut their strings, and returned discomfited. . . . In the English army there were some Cornish and Welshmen on foot, who had armed themselves with large knives; these, advancing through the ranks of the men-at-arms and archers, who made way for them, came upon the French when they were in this danger, and, falling upon earls, barons, knights, and squires, slew many."

26. One of the allies of the French, who fought very bravely on their side, was the blind King of Bohemia. When he heard that the order for the battle was given; he said to his attendants, "'Gentlemen, you are all my people, my friends, and brethren at arms this day; therefore, as I am blind, I request of you to lead me so far into the engagement that I may strike one stroke with my sword.' The knights replied that they would directly lead him forward; and in order that they might not lose him in the crowd, they fastened all the reins of their horses together, and put the king at their head, that he might gratify his wish, and advanced towards the enemy. . . . The king rode in among the enemy and made good use of his sword, for he and his companions fought most gallantly. They advanced so far that they

were all slain, and on the morrow they were found on the ground with their horses all tied together."

27. In the thick of the fight the battalion of the Prince of Wales was hard pressed and in great danger. A knight rode off in all haste to the king to entreat him for assistance. "The king replied, 'Is my son dead, unhorsed, or so badly wounded that he cannot support himself?' 'Nothing of the sort, thank God,' rejoined the knight, 'but he is in so hot an engagement that he has great need of your help.' The king answered, 'Now, Sir Thomas, return back to those that sent you, and tell them from me not to send again for me this day, or expect that I shall come, let what will happen, as long as my son has life; and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs; for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory and honour of this day shall be given to him, and to those into whose care I have entrusted him.' The knight returned to his lords and related the king's answer, which mightily encouraged them, and made them repent they had ever sent such a message."

28. At last the battle ended; the French king had to flee, and his huge army was broken to pieces. When Edward saw his noble young son return to him victorious he "embraced him in his arms and kissed him, saying, 'Sweet son, God give you good perseverance; you are my son, for most loyally have you acquitted yourself this day; you are worthy to be a sovereign.' The prince bowed down very low and humbled himself, giving all honour to the king his father."

Some people think that it was from the brave, blind King of Bohemia that the Black Prince took the famous badge of the three ostrich feathers, and the motto "Ich dien," which are still the crest and motto of the Prince of Wales. This is not very clear; nor is any one quite sure how he came by them, nor what they mean. Welsh people say "Ich Dien" are Welsh words; but most people think they are German, and that the King of Bohemia really used them. If they are German, those two words mean "I serve." Rather a strange motto for a victorious prince! One wonders whether in the hour of triumph he had a thought of Him who come not to be ministered unto, but to minister; if he began to feel, what the noblest spirits ever feel, that all great gifts and glory, high place, talents, and wealth are only theirs that they may "serve;" serve their brothers who have them not. We shall see, as we go on, how he acted on his motto, and was "lowly and serviceable," after his greatest triumph.

29. After the victory of Crecy the King of England at once laid siege to Calais. It was bravely defended, but at length was forced by famine to surrender. Edward was very indignant with the inhabitants for their obstinate resistance, and demanded that they should submit themselves absolutely to his will, without making any terms or conditions at all. Even his own barons and knights entreated him to be less harsh than this, and he at last consented to pardon all the rest if six of the principal citizens would come to him "with bare heads and feet, with ropes round their necks, and the keys of the town and castle in their hands." These six were to be at his absolute disposal. When the inhabitants of the town received information of the king's decision it caused "the greatest lamentations and despair, so that the hardest heart would have had compassion on them." But before long "the most wealthy citizen of the town, by name Eustace de St. Pierre, rose up and said, 'Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be a very great pity to suffer so many people to die through famine if any means could be found to prevent it; and it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour if such misery could be averted. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God, if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself as first of the six.' When Eustace had done speaking they all rose up and almost worshipped him; many cast themselves at his feet with tears and groans." The brave and devoted man soon found companions; one after another stood forth to offer themselves; and when the six were completed they were led before Edward, who, as Froissart tells us, "eyed them with angry looks," and ordered their heads to be struck off. All his attendants, and especially one of his bravest knights, Sir Walter Manny, entreated him to be more merciful, and not to tarnish his noble reputation by such a cruel act. But it was all in vain, till the Queen Philippa, who had come from England to visit her husband, fell on her knees before him, and said, "with tears, 'Ah, gentle sir, since I crossed the sea with great danger to see you I have never asked you one favour; now I most humbly ask as a gift, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and for your love to me, that you will be merciful to these six men.' The king looked at her for some time in silence, and then said, 'Ah, lady, I wish you had been anywhere else than here; you have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you; I therefore give them to you to do as you please with them.' The queen conducted the six citizens to her

Siege of
Calais.

The six
burghers.

apartments, and had the halters taken from their necks ; after which she new clothed them, and served them with a plentiful dinner ; she then presented each with six nobles, and had them escorted out of the camp in safety."

30. But though the six citizens were thus kindly treated by the queen, and the rest of the inhabitants escaped with their lives, they were not allowed to remain in the conquered city. All the knights and lords were put in prison, and the rest of the inhabitants were compelled to leave their homes and all they possessed, for King Edward determined to repeople the town with English alone. So cruel was war in those days. Three hundred years after this, and when Calais had been long restored to the French, an English traveller tells us how, passing through the city, he went to see "the reliques of our former dominion there," and was shown on the front of an ancient dwelling these words in English, engraven on stone, God save the king.

Note to *Nottingham Castle*, p. 271 : The secret stair communicating with an underground road to Nottingham Castle was discovered not many years ago, and is now visible.

LECTURE XXVIII.—GLORY AND SORROW.

The Battle of Poitiers. The Black Death. The serfs. Loss of Aquitaine.
The Black Prince and the parliament. Death of the prince.

1. As we saw, the French and the Scotch had become friends and allies at the time when England was against them both ; so now that the war with France was going on, and Edward and his son were abroad, the Scotch took the opportunity of invading England in the north. This time, however, they got the worst of it ; they were defeated in battle near a place called Nevil's Cross, and their king, David, was made prisoner and kept in England for nine years. Froissart says that Queen Philippa headed the English army, but this is not believed now, for no old English writer says anything about it.

2. The English now began to feel quite unconquerable. Perhaps it was at this time they first took up the idea, which we may have often heard old men repeat, that "one Englishman could beat ten Frenchmen." They grew more and more fond of fighting, and of the rich plunder they brought home : "the gold and silver plate, fair jewels, and trunks stuffed full of valuables." Ten years after the battle of Crecy there was another great battle, as famous as that one, fought near Poitiers, in the more southern part of France. The Black Prince, who, though still young, was a grown man now, was at the head of the English ; and the French king, John, at the head of his own troops. This time the army of the Black Prince consisted of only 8000 men, while the French king had more than 60,000. The prince encouraged his men with brave but not boastful words. "Now, sirs," he said, "though we be but a small company, in regard to the puissance of our enemies, let us not be abashed therefore ; for the victory lieth not in the multitude of people, but where God will send it. If it fortune that the day be ours, we shall be the most honoured people in the world ; and if we die in our right quarrel, I have the king, my father, and brethren, and also ye have good friends

1356.
Battle of
Poitiers.

and kinsmen ; these shall revenge us. Therefore, sirs, for God's sake, I require you to do your duties this day ; for if God be pleased, and St. George, this day ye shall see me a good knight."

3. The small English force was so skilfully posted, and so well managed, that once more the French were utterly defeated, and their king, who had fought very valiantly, was made prisoner. It was now that the Black Prince showed his generous spirit, his courtesy and modesty. "When evening was come," writes Froissart, "the Prince of Wales gave a supper in his pavilion to the King of France, and to the greater part of the princes and barons who were prisoners. . . . The prince himself served the king's table, as well as the others, with every mark of humility, and would not sit down at it, in spite of all his entreaties for him so to do, saying that 'he was not worthy of such an honour, nor did it appertain to him to seat himself at the table of so great a king, or of so valiant a man as he had shown himself by his actions that day.' He added also with a noble air, 'Dear sir, do not make a poor meal because the Almighty God has not gratified your wishes in the event of this day ; for be assured that my lord and father will show you every honour and friendship in his power, and will arrange your ransom so reasonably that you will henceforward always remain friends. In my opinion you have cause to be glad that the success of this battle did not turn out as you desired, for you have this day acquired such high renown for prowess that you have surpassed all the best knights on your side. I do not, dear sir, say this to flatter you, for all those of our side who have seen and observed the actions of each party have unanimously allowed this to be your due, and decree you the prize and garland for it.' At the end of this speech there were murmurs of praise heard from every one, and the French said the prince had spoken nobly and truly, and that he would be one of the most gallant princes in Christendom if God should grant him life to pursue his career of glory."

4. Three or four years after this, when both countries were quite worn out with fighting, and France was almost ruined by her own armies, and the English armies for ever ravaging and devouring everything, a peace was made. The French promised 3,000,000 of gold crowns as a ransom for their king, who was then allowed to go back to his country ; but as he could not collect the promised sum, he afterwards honestly returned to England. He died in the Savoy Palace in London, which had been fixed upon as his residence while in captivity. Edward gave up his claim to be King of France ; but he kept the duchy

of Aquitaine, and the town of Calais ; and it was agreed that he was no longer to be a vassal under the King of France for these French possessions, as he and his fathers had always been before, but to be an independent sovereign over them. The Black Prince took up his abode in Bordeaux, to rule over these French provinces.

5. Everybody is very much interested about the battles of Crecy and Poitiers, but very few histories tell us much about what happened in the ten years which came between them ; just as if the history of England was the history of kings, princes, and soldiers, and not of any other people. But it was during that time that the first of those terrible pestilences came, which were in reality far more important than either of those famous fights. A few thousand men were killed in the battles ; but without any fighting at all there were killed by this awful disease more than 2,000,000 people in England alone.

**The Black
Death.**

6. Though we know very little about it, we can imagine a great deal—a great deal of the terror, and misery, and pain, and the long sorrow afterwards. The sickness was so virulent that few who were attacked by it lived more than three days ; it was called by the dreadful name of the Black Death. It is so awful that we can hardly realize it. Let us try to think what it would be if in every house only one person died ; what wailing and woe there would arise. But it was worse than that. If there were six people in a family, three of those would have died. If there were 200 people living in a village, 100 of them would have died. Of course it was not literally that half the people in every house died ; it is more likely that in one house none might die, and in another all ; but, taking all together, there seems hardly any doubt that half the people of England died of this frightful plague ; in some places more, and in some less.

7. More than two thirds of the clergymen in Norfolk and in Yorkshire died, so that it was almost impossible to get any one to read the service ; and the bishops were obliged to make quite young boys rectors of parishes, or the churches must have been shut up. In the town of Yarmouth, which was a flourishing fishing-town then, as it is now, more than 7000 people were buried in one year, so that most of the houses were left empty and desolate, and gradually fell into decay. Nearly 200 years afterwards there were still gardens and bare spaces where there had formerly been houses full of happy people.

8. At the other side of England it was just as bad. In Bristol so many people died that there were hardly enough left alive to bury them. The principal streets were so forlorn and deserted that the grass grew several inches high in them. In smaller places, villages and hamlets, sometimes every house was left empty, all those who dwelt in them being dead.

9. It was most terrible of all in London. One of the knights whom Froissart tells us about, Sir Walter Manny, gave a large piece of land near to Smithfield on purpose to bury those who died, and in one year 50,000 people were buried there. But this new cemetery was not used till all the other churchyards were overflowing, and most likely more than 100,000 people died of this plague in London, small as it was then compared with what it is now. That cemetery of Sir Walter Manny's, with the chapel that stood in it, was afterwards given by him as a place for the monks of the Charterhouse, and it is there that the school and college (or alms-house) of the Charterhouse now stand.

10. The Black Death was perhaps the most fearful plague that ever came to England, or to Europe, for it raged in Italy, Germany, and France quite as fiercely as it did here; but there have been other very terrible ones since, of which we shall have to hear. How is it that we never hear of such plagues now? for even the worst visitations of cholera which have come in modern times have been nothing at all like this. A plague which carried off half the people of a country is now quite unheard of.

In those days people knew nothing at all about the laws of health. Their towns were dirty, crowded, and undrained. They did not know how to prevent infection from coming, nor how to check it when it came. They cared little or nothing for pure air or pure water. The windows were small, the houses dark, and the streets narrow. The doctors would often try to cure their patients by consulting the stars, or by making magical images. The clergy thought that the pestilence was sent as a judgment for sins, and led the miserable people about singing woeeful litanies, and barefooted,

"Pressing the stones with feet unused and soft,
And bearing images of saints aloft,"

in hopes of winning pardon from an angry God.

It was not until quite lately that people began to find out that care and cleanliness—clean houses, clean water, clean streets, clean

air, and clean bodies—are the means for keeping off these awful scourges. When every body knows and believes that, then, most likely, many other diseases, as fevers and cholera, will die away, and we, or rather those who come after us, will know no more about them than we know about the plague.

11. After the pestilence had passed away there was, of course, a great difference in the state of the country, and above all in the condition of the labouring men. A change had indeed been going on for some time, and a change which, in a certain way, was much for the better. The
labourers. This was, that a good many of the lowest class, the villeins and the serfs, had been gradually rising into freemen. Though it had long ceased to be a common practice for a rich man to sell his serfs, still most of the poor up till about this time were looked on as part of the estate, and were obliged to live and work always on the land where they were born; they could not wander about and change their masters and occupations as they chose. Magna Charta, which had done so much for all the other people of the land, had been of very little help to these poor labourers. The landlords even strongly objected to their serfs putting their children to school. If they did that, and a little serf boy proved to be clever, and got on with his learning, he might in time become a clergyman, and then he would be free. That was almost the only chance he would have of getting on in the world, and some, perhaps many, did really rise in this way.

12. But all this was changing now. More and more of the serfs were buying their liberty and being set free. Edward III. and his lords and knights wanted a good deal of money for their wars, and some of it they got in this way. Now, too, it was gradually becoming customary, instead of a landlord giving a poor man a piece of land and a cottage, on condition of his doing work for him, for the peasant to pay rent in money for his house and land, and the master to hire labourers to work on his own home-farm. This is how owners of land do now, and it gives more liberty and is perhaps better for both parties.

13. Moreover, there was a new sort of work now to be done in which these poor workmen could be very useful, and which was a great help to them in gaining their liberty. This was the manufacture of cloth. England had Cloth
weaving. long been noted for its fine wool, but it used to be all exported out of the country, principally to the Netherlands, because the English, as Fuller tells us, “knew no more what to

do with their wool than the sheep that wear it, as to any artificial and curious drapery." In Edward III.'s time this was altered. He invited a great many of the clever Flemish weavers to come over to England, and teach the English to make fine and beautiful cloth. This trade was very welcome to the English, and enriched them very much.

"Happy the yeoman's house into which one of these Dutchmen did enter, bringing industry and wealth along with them. Such who came in strangers among them soon after went out bridegrooms, and returned son-in-laws, having married the daughters of their landlords. Yea, those yeomen, in whose houses they dwelt, soon proceeded gentlemen, gaining great estates." This has ever since been one of the great trades of England.

14. When the Flemish weavers set up their looms and taught the English to weave cloth, of course they wanted workmen. Many serfs escaped from their masters, came to Norwich and other towns, and learnt to weave; and if they could manage to stay there a year and a day without being caught they were free, and the masters could never make them go back again. Thus there were not nearly as many serfs as there used to be, and the masters had often to hire free labourers for money, to plough and sow for them.

15. But after the Black Death there were very few labourers left, and then the same thing happened which always will happen when work is plentiful and men are scarce. The men asked for higher wages, but the masters did not want to pay them. The king's council interfered, and made a law that all the labourers were to work for their masters for the very same wages that they used to have before the plague. Masters were also forbidden to pay any higher wages than they used to pay then. If the men disobeyed they were to be put in prison. Not long afterwards a still more cruel punishment was ordered. If any of the labourers went away, and the master could catch them, he was to burn the letter F, for fugitive, into their foreheads with a hot iron.

16. But all would not avail; the people had begun to learn their value and their power; they joined together, and stood by each other, refusing to take the low wages; and those who had the means helping those who had not. Rulers know now that it is no use to make laws saying what wages men are to take or masters are to give; they must settle that between themselves; and all the law does is to hinder either party from violence or injury to the other. But in those days rulers had not yet dis-

**Statutes of
labourers.**

covered this ; they had to learn it by experience, and by very hard experience. Fresh and fresh laws were made to bind down the labourers ; but they were determined to be free. We shall see the end of this great dispute farther on.

17. After the Battle of Poitiers, and when the Prince of Wales was established at Bordeaux, it is sad and disappointing to find that things went on very ill. Perhaps his great success had turned his head. Instead of being modest and courteous, as he was before, he became proud and arrogant, and so did the English who were with him. He ruled Aquitaine very badly. Froissart says that he himself "witnessed the great haughtiness of the English, who are affable to no other nation than their own ;" they said of the gentleman of Gascony and Aquitaine "that they were neither on a level with them nor worthy of their society, which made the Gascons very indignant." We may fancy how the Gascons liked it, remembering how vain and boastful they were by nature.

**The Black
Prince in
the south.**

18. The Black Prince also went to Spain, and fought for a very cruel king there. He lost his health ; he lost his popularity. He even became, for a time, very cruel himself. He besieged and took the town of Limoges in France, and treated it even more harshly than his father would have liked to treat Calais. He permitted, and even encouraged, a most barbarous massacre of the inhabitants ; so barbarous that Froissart says "there was not that day in the city of Limoges any heart so hardened, or that had any sense of religion, who did not deeply bewail the unfortunate events passing before their eyes ; for upwards of 3000 men, women, and children were put to death that day. God have mercy on their souls ! for they were veritable martyrs."

1370.

19. Almost all the people of Aquitaine and Gascony rebelled against him, and went over to the King of France. He came back to England very ill indeed, and for four years hardly anything was heard of him. This seems a sad and disastrous ending to a life that began so brilliantly ; but just before he died he came forth once more to help his countrymen, and to win back their and our love and admiration.

20. The government of England had been going on very badly of late. Edward III. was growing old, and the dear, good Queen Philippa was dead. Edward took up with another lady, named Alice Perrers, who became his great favourite, and did many things which offended

**Discontent
in England.**

and disgusted the nation. One of the king's sons, named John, got most of the real power into his hands. Edward III., unfortunately for England, had many children, some of whose figures stand round his tomb in Westminster Abbey, on which his own beautiful image, with the flowing hair and noble face, reposes. The descendants of these children quarrelled and fought for the kingdom of England through more than 100 years. The third son, John, was born at Ghent, in Flanders, and so was called John of Ghent, or Gaunt, as it used to be written then. He married the daughter and heiress of the Duke of Lancaster, great-niece of that Earl of Lancaster whom Gaveston had called "an old hog;" so he gained her titles and estates, and became Duke of Lancaster. Though he was a clever and well-educated man he did not rule well; he took no pains to serve either the clergy or the people; the government was very wasteful, and only the courtiers were pleased. The wars he undertook were very expensive and very inglorious; he took a large army to France, which won no victories, but was nearly starved and ruined. The ministers whom he appointed to manage matters in England were altogether unworthy of trust; every one was discontented and uneasy.

21. It was not the barons now who stood forth against the tyranny, but the House of Commons, who were assembled in what was afterwards called the "Good Parliament."

1376.
Parliament
and the
Black
Prince.

Hitherto the Commons had never done much but vote for the taxes if they approved them, and present petitions against grievances; they had not attempted to meddle with the government. Once indeed, when Edward III. had attempted to consult them, they would not give any advice, very modestly saying that they were "too ignorant and simple" to form an opinion on such great matters. Now, however, things were so bad that something must assuredly be done against John of Gaunt and his ministers, and the king's favourite Alice; they declared that they would have things reformed.

22. But where were they to look for a leader—a leader brave and great enough to stand against the king, and the Duke of Lancaster, and the government? Now was the time when the Black Prince came out again from his retirement, like the evening sun from behind the storm-clouds at Crecy. He had been living in the country, at Berkhamstead, very ill; often falling into fainting fits, which looked like death; but now that he saw his country's need he came forth from his quiet retreat, and was

carried to London. He had a palace of his own in the city close to where the Monument now stands, but that was too far from the parliament, which met in the chapter-house of Westminster Abbey. He was brought to the royal palace at Westminster, so that he might be carried from his sick bed to the parliament.

23. When the Commons saw him, and knew that he was come to take their part, to stand up for freedom and justice, their spirit and the spirit of the whole nation rose. The Commons threw away their humility, and stood out boldly; they made their complaints, and for that time they won their victory. John of Gaunt had to give way, and even to leave the council altogether. Alice Perrers also was banished, and the worst of the king's ministers deposed from their places.

24. This great and patriotic effort was the end of the Black Prince. It used up his last strength, and he died in the palace at Westminster. When it was known that he was dead the sorrow and consternation were inexpressible. Even his enemies grieved for him. The King of France, the son of that King John whom he had made prisoner at Poitiers, had special prayers and services said for him in the lovely Sainte Chapelle at Paris. But his own friends and relations, and his own country, could not be comforted at all. His aged father never recovered from it, and died the next year. One of his old fellow-soldiers was so heart-broken that he refused to take any food, and died in a few days of grief and starvation. And the whole English nation mourned as it has, perhaps, never mourned before or since.

Death of
the prince.

LECTURE XXIX.—MEDIÆVAL ENGLAND.

The English people 500 years ago. The language. The writers. The friars. The clergy.

1. NOTWITHSTANDING all his victories, we have seen that Edward III. could not succeed in becoming King of France, but had to be contented, as well he might, with being King of England. Let us now learn something more of what England was at that time. The Americans have a saying that "it takes all sorts to make a nation." We will in the next two lectures find out what we can about some of the "sorts" who made up the English nation 500 years ago,—about the knights and squires, the country gentlemen, the clergymen, the ladies, the servants, the poor people,—and see if they were at all like the same class of people now; and, again, about some people of whom we do not see much in England at present, but of whom there were plenty in those days—the monks and nuns, and the friars. We will try and see how they lived, what they liked, what they believed, and what they thought.

2. One great change had already taken place. Hitherto almost all the books we have had to read, to learn about the history of our country, were written in Latin; but the books which we must read to learn its condition at this time were written in English. It is very old-fashioned English; the spelling is different from our spelling, and there are a good many words here and there which we do not use now. But still it is English, and if we take a little trouble we soon get to read it quite easily. If we compare it with the old English before the Norman Conquest we see the change which was mentioned some time ago; we see many beautiful words which are not in the old language, and which are a great improvement to it; but the whole substance of the language is still that of our old German forefathers.

3. After the Norman Conquest the king and the upper classes all spoke French, and it is very strange to think that all the

school-children even were taught in French, which must have made learning very up-hill work to them. A little before this time it had become still more fashionable to talk French rather than English, and those who wanted to appear "genteel" always tried to do so, though they spoke very queer French sometimes.

4. But soon after this one John Cornewaile, a schoolmaster, had the bright idea that children would get on with their lessons better if they learnt in their own language; and other schoolmasters catching the thought from him, in about thirty years all was changed, and in every grammar-school they were taught in English, as they are now, and learnt French as a foreign language. Just about the same time the lawyers were made to talk English in the law-courts. Now, too, the fine lords and ladies at court, the princes and princesses, kings and queens, began to talk English, and to read English books. An English knight, Sir John Mandeville, who was a great traveller, and wrote a very amusing book in French full of his adventures and the wonderful things he saw or heard of, afterwards translated it into English, that every man of the nation, "lords and knights, and other noble and worthy men," might understand it. Thus the last distinction between the conquerors and the conquered disappeared, and in this sense at least we may say that the vanquished English overcame the victorious French.

5. The writers from whom we learn most about the manners and thoughts of the people at that time were not historians, writing histories, but poets, writing either to instruct or to amuse the people amongst whom they lived. **The authors.** One of them was a poor man, though a scholar, and he wrote for poor people. Two others were gentlemen living near the court, and writing sometimes for the king or princes and princesses. Naturally, therefore, the books are very different; but they all agree in many points. The writers all saw the same things, and described them truthfully in their different ways; they were all keen, and clever, and clear-eyed.

6. The first of them was called William, and though his surname is thought to have been Langlande, no one is quite sure what it was. Perhaps he had none at all; for in those days it was rather looked on as a mark of a gentleman to have a surname. Poor men generally only had a kind of nickname, or were called after their trades, as Tyler, or Baker, or Butcher. He belonged in some way to the Church, for he had a shaven crown; but he had a wife called Kit, and a daughter called Calote.* He seems to have earned

**William
Langlande.**

living, and a very poor one, by singing hymns at rich men's funerals. This was not a cheerful occupation, and he had a very melancholy spirit. His long poem, which is called the 'Vision of Piers the Ploughman,' is mostly, very sad, and tells us a great deal about the evils of the times, and the sins of all classes of people. This book has hardly any of the new foreign words in it; the lower people did not use or understand them yet; it was written in what we may call a rougher language, powerful but not elegant.

7. The other principal writer was named Geoffrey Chaucer, and is called the father of English poetry. Some people think his father was a gentleman, and others that he was a tradesman; but at any rate he was very prosperous and well-to-do. Geoffrey had a busy, stirring life.

**Geoffrey
Chaucer.**

He soon got offices in the court, and was thought a great deal of by some of the princes, especially by John of Gaunt. He was sent abroad several times; once he was a soldier, fought and was taken prisoner in France, but was soon set free. At other times he went to Italy, to some of the beautiful cities there, to Florence, and Padua, and Genoa, where he saw lovely country, beautiful buildings and pictures, and, what he perhaps enjoyed still more, some of the great and learned men of Italy and their books. He afterwards translated some of the charming tales he learnt there into English.

8. Thus there was a great contrast between the two: one grave, poor, and indignant; the other gay, prosperous, and genial. But in many points, when they happen to write on the same subjects, they agree wonderfully. They were both *good* men, true at heart, hating sin and loving righteousness. Each confirms the other, though they tell the tale in a very different way.

9. William, in his poem, says he had a dream in which he saw a "field full of folk," and he tells us what they looked like, and how they talked and behaved. There were gentlemen and ladies gaily dressed, poor labourers, townspeople, bakers, cooks, singers and jugglers, beggars, priests, bishops, friars, &c. Could we but have a dream like it, and see that field once! It would teach us more than reading books of history for a year. But the next best is reading in his own words what he saw and heard.

10. Chaucer tells us about just the same people, only he introduces them in another way. His was not a dream; what he says he saw he may have really seen with wide-awake eyes. He met with a knight, a squire, a lady, a monk, an innkeeper, a parish clergyman, a cook, a ploughman, a scholar, a sailor, and

many others, and gives us very perfect descriptions of them all. Where does he say all these met together? They were going on pilgrimage to the famous shrine of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. Chaucer says, when the sweet spring weather came in all these people began to think of going on pilgrimages, and the favourite place in all England was Canterbury.

“The holy blissful martyr for to seke
That them hath holpen, when that they were seke” (or sick).

It was rather a long journey in those days from London to Canterbury, and the roads in many parts of England were not at all safe, on account of the crowds of robbers. Partly perhaps for that reason, and partly for company's sake, the pilgrims would travel together. One night in April or May a number of pilgrims of all sorts happened to be assembled in an inn at Southwark, intending to start the next morning for Canterbury. Geoffrey Chaucer says he was one of these. The innkeeper, who was a very lively, jovial sort of host, proposes that they shall amuse themselves on the long journey by telling stories, and whoever tells the best story shall be rewarded by all the others giving him a good supper on their return.

11. Going on pilgrimage in those days was not a particularly religious ceremony; it was more like a pleasure-party. The pilgrims rode very comfortably on horseback; sometimes they would have singers and bagpipe players to accompany them; this time the amusement was to be telling stories. Some of the tales are beautiful, some are droll; some of them are hardly fit to read now-a-days, and show how coarse the lower classes, at least, must have been then. The tales that the better-bred people tell—the knight, the scholar, the lady, and others—are most delicately thought and expressed.

12. The other court poet was named Gower. He wrote three principal books, the first in French, the second in Latin; and by the time he had written both of these, people had begun to read English books, so he wrote the last in English. He was a fine scholar, though not a genius like Chaucer, but we can help out our picture of the times by some of the things he says. Gower.

13. Another man who wrote a great deal, and, above all, who gave England a gift better even than the best of Chaucer's beautiful poetry, who gave her the Bible in English, was John Wycliffe, an Oxford man and a clergyman, of whom we shall hear more farther on. Wycliffe.

14. We are now on the very threshold of the Reformation. We have already heard of the extortions and tyranny of the popes, and how the English were disgusted by them. Nevertheless they still went on. The parliament protested; they said the Pope got five times as much out of the country as the government did. Italian cardinals and priests were made archdeacons, deans, and prebends of English benefices, and the good and learned English clergy (such as there were, and there were some) were kept poor and obscure. Gower wrote, "Rome bites the hand that does not bring a gift. From the court of Rome, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John would get no answer to any of their asking if they took no gift with them."

15. It will be remembered how the Grey Brothers and the Black Brothers had come to England more than 150 years before ;

how they had protested against all this love of **The friars.** money and worldliness; how they had preached to the poor and comforted the sick. But by this time these brothers or friars had grown almost worse than anybody else. They still professed to be more humble, more religious and saint-like, than the rest of the world, but now it was all hypocrisy, and the people had found them out. Every one of the books just mentioned has something, and mostly a great deal, to say against the friars. They pretended to be so poor that they had to beg their bread, and they went cringing about everywhere asking for money, and trying to make the people believe they would never go to heaven unless they gave to them.

16. There was a friar among the pilgrims going to Canterbury, of whom Chaucer says "he was the best beggar of all his house." If a poor widow had but one shoe he would get a farthing out of her before he went away. The friars did not ask for money only. They would beg rings and brooches, even flour and cheese, beef and blankets; in fact, all was fish that came to their net. He asks for a very pretty little dinner at a farm-house where he goes begging: the best part of a fowl, white bread, and a roast pig's head; and then boasts that he wants but little food he is so fond of reading the Bible.

He used to go about hearing confessions, and he was very easy in the penances he ordered, and very ready to give absolution, as long as he got plenty of money.

"Therefore, instede of weping and praieres
Men mote give silver to the poure freres."

Chaucer tells this and a great deal more, with a smile on his

face. William Langlande, however, says just the same in his grave way. In his dream he tells how a friar comes to one full of sorrow for sin, whom he calls Contrition. The friar gives Contrition a plaster, called "privy-payment." He says, "I shall pray for you all my life-time—for a little silver." Then Contrition (I suppose after paying the silver) "clean forgot to cry, and weep, and watch for his wicked works as he did before." He tells us in another place that when workmen were badly off, such as weavers, and tailors, and carters' boys, they "at last espied that friars had fat cheeks." So then they left their labour, put on friars' clothes, and lolled about and lived at their ease.

**Selling
pardons.**

It was above all the poor lepers whom St. Francis and his disciples had tried to comfort and help; but Chaucer tells us that his friar knew the taverns in every town, "and every hostler and gay tapstere" better than he knew a leper or a beggar.

17. We may be glad this brood of lazy, hypocritical friars have been swept away from the face of the country. But we must not think that, because by this time the friars had become so degenerate, all the preaching and the beautiful lives of the first and truly holy ones went for nothing. They were bearing fruit now, not in the new friars, but in the hearts of pious men, like Wycliffe, and like William Langlande, and of many thousands of others, doubtless, who felt as they did, though they could not put their thoughts into words.

18. This selling of pardon for sin, teaching the people that paying money was more worth than repentance and mending their lives, was one of the things that stirred up the wrath of honest men almost more than anything else. The "pardons" were papers or parchments, which were bought of the friars or other "pardoners." One of the Canterbury pilgrims was a pardoner, who had a sack full of them "hot from Rome." A priest asks Piers the Ploughman, who is come to teach better things, to show him *his* pardon. Piers unfolds the pardon; it has only two lines written in it—the words of Christ.

"They that have done good shall go into life eternal,
But they that have done ill into everlasting fire."

William Langlande puts the meaning into a still shorter phrase. "Do well and have well; do ill and have ill." But the priest says this is no pardon at all.

19. A great many of the other clergy of those days gave great

disgust to the serious-minded by their grand living ; their worldliness, pomp, and show. There was a monk who went on the pilgrimage too. He was beautifully dressed ; his sleeves were trimmed with fine fur, "the finest in the lond." He had a curious gold pin, with a love-knot in it, to fasten his hood under his chin. He was fat, and he liked good eating.

**Worldly
clergy.**

"He was not pale, as is a starved gost,
A fat swan loved he best of any roast."

He kept plenty of good horses and hounds. "Why was he to study, and make himself mad poring over books ? or to work with his hands, as Augustine bade ?" He had bells on his horse's bridle that would jingle in the wind "as loud and clere as doth a chapell bell." Gower tells of rectors of parishes that did just the same. "They feed dogs, not men ; and when they speak of God, think of a hare."

20. There was a Bishop of Lincoln about this time of whom Fuller tells that he did a thing which would make us very indignant now. "By mere might, against all right and reason, he took in the land of many poor people (without making the least reparation) to complete his park at Tinchurst,"—land where the poor people used to grow corn, and feed sheep and cows,—in order that he might keep the more deer. This was William the Conqueror in miniature. Fuller goes on, "These wronged persons, though seeing their own bread, beef, and mutton turned into the bishop's venison, durst not contest with him . . . only they loaded him with curses and execrations." Fuller, having told this, cannot resist (nor can I) adding another story about the taking in of common land, though it happened after this time. He says, "A knight went about injuriously to enclose the commons of a town, and demanded of his bailiff what the railing in of the same would amount to ; to whom his servant answered, that 'if he would take in the common, the country would find him railings ;' as they did now to this injurious bishop."

21. But even now the clergy were not all like this. There was a parish clergyman who went on the pilgrimage to Canterbury ; a very different man from the wealthy, hunting monk, the hypocritical, begging friar, or the pardoner fresh from Rome. Chaucer, who tells us in a gay, mocking way about all those, becomes gentle and serious when he paints this poor parson. We feel that he loved him, and

**The poor
parson.**

he makes us love him too. Here is part of the description, well worth reading, notwithstanding its old-fashioned look.

"A good man ther was of religioun
That was a poure Persone of a toun :
But riche he was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche.
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche,
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitie ful patient ;
And swiche he was ypreved often sithes.
Full lothe were him to cursen for his tithes,
But rather would he yeven (give) out of doute
Unto his poure parishens aboute,
Of his offring and eke of his substance.
He coude in litel thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne left nought, for no rain ne thonder,
In sickness and in mishief (misfortune) to visite
The ferrest in his parish, moche and lite (great and small),
Upon his fete, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his shepe he yaf (gave),
That first he wrought, and afterward he taught."

He would not go away to seek after preferment, leaving his sheep encumbered in the mire, "but dwelt at home, and kepte wel his fold."

"And though he holy were and vertuous
He was to sinful men not dispitous (pitiless),
Ne of his speche dangerous ne digne (disdainful),
But in his teching discrete and benigne.
To drawen folk to heaven, with faireness
By good ensample, was his business ;
But if were any person obstinat,
What so he were of highe or low estate,
Him wolde he snibben (reprove or *snub*) sharply for the nones.
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taught, but first he folwed it himselfe."

No one who has lived in all the 500 years since Chaucer, could better that simple picture ; nor need we wish for a wiser or holier parson in our towns and villages now.

Note to *Langland's wife*, p. 289 : The sextons, grave-diggers, bell-ringers, &c. were tonsured, and to a certain extent regarded as ecclesiastics, but it appears any one under a subdeacon might have a wife.

LECTURE XXX.—MEDIÆVAL ENGLAND (*continued*).

The knights. The state of education. The households, dress, and luxury of the rich. The condition of the poor.

1. We have already heard a great deal of the knights of those days. Chaucer gives us a most charming account of the one who went on pilgrimage with him, accompanied by his son and one servant. We cannot conceive a more perfect gentleman. Though very brave, having fought many battles, and seen a great deal of the world, there is no boasting or bluster about him. His manners are as gentle as a maid's. With all the mixed company he falls into, he gives himself no airs. He rides pleasantly with the rest, agrees to the host's proposal, draws lots with the others, and tells his story most cheerfully and courteously.

2. This brave warrior, who had been in fifteen battles, besides sieges, has a very tender heart. One of the other pilgrims tells, for his tale, of a great many people who, from happiness and prosperity, had fallen into misery; at last he tells a most piteous story of one who was starved to death with his three children. The little ones die before his eyes, and then he himself, for despair and hunger, dies. The knight cannot bear this; he breaks in and prays there may be no more of it. He says it is great sorrow to him to hear of the unhappiness of those who have been happy.

“And the contrar is joye, and gret solas!
As when a man hath been in poor estate
And climbeth up, and waxeth fortunate
And there abideth in prosperitee—
Such thing is gladsome, as it thinketh me.”

We see in him the best and beautiful side of chivalry. Chaucer teaches us, in another place, what it is to be a gentleman. He says we are not to think it is to be rich and nobly born, but we should look who is most virtuous, and tries always

“to do the gentil dedes that he can—
And take him for the greatest gentleman.”

Froissart had begun to think something of the same kind too, or at any rate he knew that treacherous and wicked actions were unworthy of a gentleman. He tells us of a squire who did a very base and cowardly deed, that "he was scarcely a gentleman, for no gentleman would ever have practised such base wickedness." This is a much more noble idea of a "gentleman" than many people hold now-a-days, for it is to be feared a great many now think "gentillesse" lies in gold and silver more than in "gentil deeds."

3. It would have been very pleasant for us if, as well as his son, the knight had brought his wife with him, that we might have seen what a married lady in those times was like, and how she employed herself. But the only lady *The lady.* who went on the pilgrimage was a prioress, that is, the head of a nunnery. In both monasteries and convents they seem to have paid a good deal of attention to manners. All the little things which are taught to children in the nursery now, were serious matters of regulation then. The monks of Westminster had special rules for their behaviour at dinner, forbidding them to stare, or to put their elbows on the table, or to crack nuts with their teeth. This lady was very refined, indeed, she took great pains to be elegant and stately in her demeanour, as if she had been at court. She talked French too, to seem more fashionable; but Chaucer very slyly tells us that her French was

"after the school of Stratford atte Bow,
For French of Paris was to her unknowe."

One of the marks of good manners in those times was to "eat nicely," and not to spill crumbs and sauce about, and she took great pains in that respect. Fine ladies were particularly fond of little pet lap-dogs; in the pictures painted at this time we frequently see them sitting idly in gardens, or even riding on horse-back, nursing little dogs. So this lady had "small hounds" that she fed with roast meat, and milk, and the finest bread. And if one of them died she wept sore. She was so tender-hearted, indeed, that she would weep if a mouse were killed or hurt in a trap. She would have been a very sweet lady had she spent some of her gentleness and tender-heartedness upon the poor, which we do not hear that she did.

4. The knights and ladies had very refined tastes in some ways. They loved gardens and flowers; above all, roses (but Chaucer loved best the simple English daisy). They loved the songs of birds; walking in a grove with the soft grass under their feet,

and the thrushes and nightingales singing above their heads, was as sweet to them as to us. By this time, also, there was a good deal more education among them than there had been formerly. We may be sure all these English books would not have been written if there had been no one to read them. And it was evi-

dently the pleasant custom for those who knew how, **Education of a gentleman.** to read aloud to those who did not, as Robert Bruce used to amuse his companions, when they were driven to their wild life among the mountains. One man (a little before this time), who wrote a history of England in rhyme, says expressly that he wrote it in English, not for learned people, but for unlearned, who knew neither Latin nor French, that they might have solace and pleasure, when they were sitting together in fellowship.

5. This knight had a son with him, a charming young fellow, about twenty years old. He was a squire as yet, but of course would be a knight like his father in due time. Chaucer fortunately tells us what he had been taught, so we see the best education which a gentleman's son would get in those days. He had learned to sit well on his horse, and all things belonging to the soldier's art, for he had already seen real fighting, and "borne him well," besides jousting, or the fighting in play, which was then so fashionable. Moreover, he could sing and play on the flute; he could write, so of course he could read; he could draw; he could even make songs himself; and he could dance.

Reading, writing, poetry, music, drawing, dancing, riding, and fighting—a very nice education for a young officer. But he had learnt with all this, besides, to be modest and polite.

"Curteis he was, lowly and servisable,
And carf before his fader at the table."

To carve the meat for their elders and betters was considered part of the duty of the young squires and pages. "He was as fresh as is the month of May," and had curly hair. He wore a very pretty dress: a sort of short tunic, with long and wide sleeves, all embroidered like a meadow, with "fresh flowers, white and red." His father was very soberly dressed. "His horse was good, but he ne was not gay."

6. The country gentlemen lagged far behind in the matter of education. There was one of them, too, in the company, a rich man who had often been knight of the shire, or member of parliament for his part of the country. The principal

thing he seemed to have cared about was eating and drinking. When his turn came to tell his tale, he begs all his hearers to excuse him for his plain way of speaking, because he has never learned much. But he certainly wished for something better. He took a great liking to the curly-headed young squire, and quite appreciated the pleasing way in which he spoke and told his tale. He wished his own son were like him; instead of which, he thought of nothing but playing at dice and wasting his money, and he did not care about talking with gentlemen, that he might "learn gentillesse aright."

7. The young squire's education was just suited to fit him for his life in the world; but there was one of the company who was a real scholar—an Oxford man. They are generally pretty gay and lively in our times, but this one was a real hard-worker, very poor and very learned. **Learning and philosophy.**

"As lenë was his horse as is a rake,
And he was not right fat, I undertake."

He did not care for elegant clothes, nor for music and dancing. All he wanted was books. Though he had "but little gold in coffer," he did not care for that. Whatever money he got, or that his friends gave him, it all went in books. He liked to have learned books at his bed's head; they were his delight and joy.

"And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche."

8. In the universities there was a great deal of hard study; they went very deeply into logic and metaphysics and other profound matters, and sometimes seem to have wasted a great deal of good labour and cleverness on what led to very little result. Besides all sorts of abstruse questions very difficult to solve, and perhaps not worth solving after all, learned people, who gave their attention to visible and material objects, as yet believed a great many things which we know now to be quite untrue.

Besides their belief about comets and eclipses, which were still considered as supernatural, and having much to do with the affairs of men, they had many other strange ideas about the heavenly bodies. They thought that all a man's life and fortunes in the world depended on what stars could be seen in the sky, and in what part of the sky, at the moment he was born. We still have the saying of a person having been born under a lucky or an unlucky star, or of being of **Astrology.**

a jovial, mercurial, or saturnine temper, though we do not now think a man will be of a joyous, friendly spirit if the planet Jupiter shone upon his birth, or gloomy and morose if he was born under Saturn. One clever old writer, who believed the stars influenced the characters of whole nations, and who had noticed, quite accurately, that Englishmen were fond of roving, and always keen to see foreign lands and strange sights, while the natives of India are content to stay at home and never wish to change, accounts for it by the theory that India is under Saturn, which, he says, takes thirty years in travelling through the signs of the zodiac ; while our country is under the moon, which moves rapidly, and goes through those signs in one month.

9. It was also thought that the stars continued to have an influence over the actions of their lives. Before beginning any business, or doing anything important, people would consult some astrologer or learned man, who should tell by the stars whether it would prosper or not. A lady would perhaps take his opinion about her marriage, whether her suitor loved her or not, &c. The astrologer believed or pretended that he could find out that, by looking where the moon and some of the stars were ; as though they would not have been in the very same places if neither the lady nor her lover had ever been born. Others would consult astrologers as to whether they would prosper if they took to dealing in sheep or pigs, instead of considering how much land they had, and how they should feed them, and so forth. Doctors also attempted to cure their patients by studying the stars, and making images of them when particular stars were in the ascendant.

10. The astrologers were very learned in their way, and no doubt by observing the sky so much they found out many things which helped on the real science of astronomy ; but as yet the wisest of them still believed that our earth was the centre of the universe, and that it alone was fixed and immovable, while the sun, moon, and stars revolved around it. They had begun, however, to believe that it was not flat, but a round globe, and the same traveller, who thought it was the moon made Englishmen so restless, was quite convinced that it would be possible to go all round it. In the very centre of the earth they believed hell was placed.

11. Another way in which learned men wasted a great deal of time, and wore out their lives and hearts, was in trying to make gold. They were fully convinced that, in some way or other, by mixing things together, melting

Alchemy.

them, evaporating them, or some such process, they would be able to make that precious thing which all men coveted. They never succeeded, and it has now been long believed that gold is one of the simple elements; but, doubtless, though they never succeeded in that, they found out many curious facts about the things with which they made their experiments. So that as the *astrologers* helped to find out the truths of astronomy, the *alchemists* found out many of the truths of chemistry, about gases, acids, and drugs, which it is very useful to know, and we have the comfort of thinking that all their toil was not wasted.

12. The well-bred young squire of whom Chaucer gives such a pleasant account was, perhaps, hardly a fair specimen of his class. William Langlande has a great deal to say about the fashionable young lords who cared for nothing but idleness, gaiety, and fine clothes. They spend all their money in chains and ornaments, and "except their sleeves slide on the earth" they are very wroth. He even tells us (with great scorn and indignation) of the fashion of their clothes.

**Dress of
the rich.**

‘ But now there is a guise, the quaintest of all,
A wonder-curious craft is come now of late,
That men call carving the cloth all to pieces,
That seven good sewers, six weeks after,
Cannot set the seams, nor sew them again.”

They pay twenty-times as much for making up the dress as the cloth cost at first.

13. Parliament even interfered with the love of finery, and tried to fix rules for the dress of people according to their rank. Kings and the royal family were to have the best fur, as ermine, and ornaments of pearls, &c. The richer knights and ladies might have cloth of gold or silver embroidered with jewels, and trimmed with miniver. Poor knights and squires had cloth of silver, and their ribands and girdles "reasonably" embroidered with silver. Those who were of a lower rank were not to wear any silk, any silver, or any ornaments of gold or jewels. If any one ventured to wear a dress forbidden by these laws it was to be taken away from him.

14. There was altogether great luxury among the higher classes. Kings and great lords kept enormous households, and lived very abundantly. If it were worth while we could find out a great deal about their diet, for amongst the other books that were published about this time there was a cookery-book! They were very fond of flavouring

Their food.

with pepper and saffron, wine and vinegar, and seem to have taken vast pains with their dishes. Here is a receipt for making an apple-pie : "Take gode applys, and gode spyces, and figys, and reysons, and perys (pears), and whan they are well y-brayed (pounded) coloure with saffron wel, and do yt in a cofyn, and do yt forth to bake wel." A coffin, we must understand, at that time meant any sort of box, and here it was what we should call a "mould." What we mean by a coffin they called a "chest." Our friend the country gentleman evidently liked pepper and vinegar and that sort of thing.

"Wo was his coke but if his sauce were

Poignant and sharpe"—

"It snewed in his house of meat and drink."

He had every kind of dainty, varying with the seasons : fish, meat, partridges, &c. ; plenty of good wine and ale ; and his table stood ready covered all day long.

15. In the winter people had to eat a great quantity of salted meat, for they had not yet learned to feed cattle as our farmers do, with oil-cake, mangel-wurzel, and the like. One of the great lords had at one time in his larder, which must have been a pretty large one, 600 bacon (salted pigs), eighty carcasses of beef, and 600 sheep, for they salted mutton in those days as well as beef and pork. But this was at the end of the winter, so we may imagine what he had at the beginning. He had besides, alive, 28,000 sheep, and enormous numbers of oxen, cows, and pigs.

16. All this was to feed the innumerable servants and dependents of all sorts whom he kept. These servants, who had not much work to do, grew very idle and self-indulgent.

Servants. They are always complaining of their food ; they disdain salt meat, and grumble when there is no roast ; they quarrel with the cookery, and with the beer, and say they will not stay in their places unless they get a better dinner to-morrow. So when people now-a-days find fault with their servants, and Punch draws pictures about them, they may as well remember that their great great grandfathers and grandmothers used to say just the same. There was even a law passed that the servants were not to expect to eat meat and fish twice a day.

17. Meanwhile, the poor people were very badly off indeed. The one sad and grievous fault of this time was, as we have

The poor. often seen, that the rich and the poor were so far apart from each other, and hardly seemed to know

or feel that they were of one flesh and blood. We know as well, however, how the poor lived as we do about the rich people's fine dinners. Chaucer takes the trouble to give us a very particular account of a certain poor old widow, who lived with her two daughters in a narrow cottage in a dale; this same cottage, he says, was "full sooty." She knew nothing about "poignant sauce" or dainty morsels. She was never made sick or had the gout with over-eating and drinking. Her table was mostly served with *white* and *black*. The white was milk, and the black was bread—white bread being a delicacy in those days; most people eat coarse, very dark-coloured bread, made of rye or barley, beans or peas. She had bacon, and sometimes an egg or two. This was not very bad fare, as far as nourishment went; if she had only some potatoes and some tea she would have done pretty well. But sometimes the poor were much worse off than that. This widow, who lived in the country, had some cows and some pigs; that was how she got her milk and her bacon. She had poultry too (the rest of the story is taken up with the adventures of her cocks and hens).

18. There is a piteous description of still poorer people given by William Langlande. He feels for the women most, where they have large families to keep. They spend all their time in carding and spinning wool, and can hardly earn enough to buy milk and flour to make pap for their children. They themselves suffer much hunger and woe in the winter; they have to get up at night to rock the cradle; they have to mend and wash; beside all this, they must card and comb the wool ready for spinning, or they would not get food for their children, and they get little enough after all their toil—a farthing's worth of mussels would be a feast for them. The winter-time, of course, is always the hardest for the poor, but it used to be much worse then than it is now. The ploughman describes what he has got to eat some time before harvest. He had no bacon left, nor had he a penny to buy pigs or geese, which were the commonest animals then, for pigs could feed in the woods, and geese on the commons; he had some cheese, and curds, and cream, some coarse bread made of beans, peas, and oats, a few vegetables, onions, and parsley, and cabbages, some half-ripe cherries and apples. And this poor fare must last till harvest, when he will be better off.

19. But when the better times came, and the labourers were getting more wages, and things were plentiful, they were very extravagant; it was just as it had been in William of Malmes-

bury's days ; they were more inclined to "revelling" than to laying by their money. Then they would not eat the coarse brown bread, but must have the very best and finest wheaten bread ; no "half-penny ale" for them then, but the strongest and brownest that brewers could make ; nor would they eat bacon, but fresh hot meat or fish ; and so it went on till the bad weather, and cold and scarcity, came again, and hunger pinched them. Sometimes hunger and cold pinched them terribly ; we shall hear in the next reign what came of it.

20. We will end this lecture by reading the advice William Langlande gives to the different classes of people in the land.

William Langlande's admonitions. Though he is a poor man himself, and sees the faults and follies of the rich very clearly, he does not wish to do away with them altogether, and to level all people to one another. He does not wish the lords and knights to turn ploughmen, but he wishes them to leave off their follies and fopperies. They are to be merciful to their tenants, to take no gifts from the poor, nor to hurt their bondmen. They are to reprove robbers, flatterers, and false men, and to help to keep good order in the land. He says they ought to hunt wild beasts. They are rather fond of doing so now for their amusement ; but we have to remember that at that time the greater part of the country was still wild forest and waste land, full of foxes, hares, and other creatures, which did great harm to the farmers. There seem even to have been wolves still, which, he says, worried men, women, and children. So he desires the knights to hunt these and the wild birds of prey, on the week-days ; but to go to church on Sundays, and attend to their religion.

The merchants are to trade honestly, and to use their wealth in repairing hospitals for the sick, in mending bridges which are broken down, helping poor sick people and prisoners, and to do other charitable works, and then he promises no devil shall hurt them.

The lawyers are not to take bribes, but for the love of the Lord they are to speak for the innocent and poor, and to comfort them.

The sick, the blind, and the unfortunate are to be helped and comforted ; but the idle beggars are to be set to work. They are to be fed with dog's food until they will work ; but when they have deserved it they shall sup the better.

Women are to do a good deal of needlework. Some of them are to sew sacks for the wheat ; the ladies, with their long fingers,

should sew with silk, and work vestments for the clergy ; and they should all spin wool and flax to make cloth for the poor, and help the labourer who wins their food.

There is one set of people he cannot put up with at all—the jugglers and story-tellers, who went about to amuse the people. As he was of a very grave and melancholy sort of character, anything like fun and merry-making was, as Solomon says, “like vinegar upon nitre” to him. We need not agree with him in this, but otherwise we shall perhaps all feel that the world would still be the better if the spirit of his advice were followed ; and shall agree too with Gower, when he says the sun looks not on a worthier race than the English, “had but its people love for one another.”

LECTURE XXXI.—NEW ASPIRATIONS.

Wycliffe. The English Bible. Richard II. Wat Tyler and the insurrection of the people. Its results.

1. Of all the great men who lived in Edward III.'s long reign, and that of his successor, Richard II., the one whose work was the most important and has borne the most precious fruit was John Wycliffe, who has been called the Father of the Reformation. The Reformation we may look upon as the greatest event in the whole history of England; it is that which has most affected all our lives and thoughts and actions.

2. We have seen how for several hundred years there had been frequent disputes with the Pope, from the time when William the Conqueror disdainfully refused to do homage to him for the kingdom of England. We remember the great quarrel in Henry II.'s time, which ended in the murder of Becket, and Henry's humble submission. Going on a little farther, we find King John really owning the Pope as his master, doing homage to his legate for his crown, and paying him a large tribute. Though this caused great fury and indignation among the English, it was never formally put an end to till, in the reign of Edward III., the whole parliament, lords, commons, and bishops too, agreed all together to cast it off, and declared they would not only not pay up the back sums of the tribute which had fallen into arrears, but would never pay it at all any more.

3. Still all these disputes were what we may call political; they were all concerning worldly affairs, and had nothing to do with religious belief. Up till this time all the English people believed every one of the doctrines of the Roman Church. John

Wycliffe. Wycliffe was the first man who began to doubt some of those doctrines, and to teach other people to do the same. He was a clergyman, a very learned and clever man, the head of Balliol College at Oxford. He was also a man of a strong character, very religious, and heartily in earnest in whatever he did.

4. His war with the Church began—just as we might expect, after all we have heard—in a war with the friars. He saw, as Chaucer and Langlande did, all the wickedness and hypocrisy of these men, and the evil they wrought among the people. He wrote against them, and he preached against them; and his books and sermons, being very forcible and clever, had a great effect on men's minds. At one time he fell very ill, and was thought to be dying; upon which a deputation of some of the friars paid him a visit, and after a few polite wishes for his health they exhorted him, now that he was at the point of death, that he would, "as a true penitent, bewail and revoke in their presence whatever things he had said to their disparagement. But Dr. Wycliffe, immediately recovering strength, called his servants to him, and ordered them to raise him a little on his pillows; which when they had done, he said with a loud voice, 'I shall not die, but live, and declare the evil deeds of the friars.' On which they departed from him in confusion."

5. During the time when John of Gaunt was managing the kingdom in his father's old age, he was engaged in a great political strife with the clergy and bishops, and was very glad to find a helper in Wycliffe. Accordingly, John of Gaunt protects him. for a time he favoured and protected him. "Apostolic poverty for the clergy was the idea they had in common; it was recommended to them by very different reasons," says a modern historian.

6. Wycliffe soon began to use very strong language about the Pope, calling him "Antichrist, a proud and worldly priest, and the most cursed of purse-clippers and kervers" (carvers). He also said many other things which made the bishops very indignant. The Archbishop of Canterbury suspended him, and he was summoned to appear before an assembly of bishops at St. Paul's Church in London. 1377. Assembly of bishops. John of Gaunt and the Lord Marshall of England, Henry Percy, went with Wycliffe, to protect and encourage him in case of any violence. There was an immense concourse of people crowding around, and within the Ladye Chapel a grand assembly of dukes and lords, besides the bishops and archbishops.

7. But Wycliffe had no chance to speak a word. These great lords soon fell to quarrelling. The quarrel is told very amusingly by Foxe, who wrote the lives of the English reformers. A few words of Lord Percy, he says, cast the Bishop of London "into a fumish chafe;" and very soon a fire began to heat and kindle between them, "insomuch that they began so to rate and revile one

the other that the whole multitude, therewith disquieted, began to be set in a hurry." John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, now spoke upon Wycliffe's side; to whom the bishop, "nothing inferior in reproachful checks and rebukes, did render and requite to him not only as good as he brought, but also did so far excel him that the duke blushed and was ashamed, because he could not overpass the bishop in brawling and railing." The duke presently whispered (not so low but that he could be overheard) that "he would rather drag the bishop out of the church by the hair of his head than he would take this at his hand." Then the citizens stood up for their bishop, and "with scolding and brawling" the council broke up.

8. After this the Pope sent what Foxe calls a "wild bull" against Wycliffe; but no harm came of it, for John of Gaunt still protected him, and this time the citizens of London also took his part. When this Pope died the state of the Roman Church grew still worse than before, since it became divided

1378. against itself, and two rival popes were set up, who were most furious enemies to each other, and set the whole Christian world at enmity. The English took the side of one Pope, and the French that of the other, and each party called the opposite one "dogs."

9. The Pope whom the English supported sent some of those "sacks full of pardons" to England, and proclaimed that he would absolve from every crime or fault those who would help him in destroying his enemies. These pardons, of course, were not to be had for nothing; but so eagerly were they bought that, in the diocese of London alone, "there was collected," says Froissart, "a large Gascony tun full of money . . . and it was solemnly declared that all who had given their money, and should die at this time, were absolved from every fault."

We know what such men as Langlande and Wycliffe must have felt when all this was going on. Wycliffe, however, soon began to think that it was not only the things which the Pope and the clergy did which were wrong, but also those which they taught and believed.

10. The principal doctrine which Wycliffe contested was that concerning the sacrament, and the miraculous change in the bread and wine, which was called transubstantiation. But he soon went on to other doctrines too, such as "pardons," pilgrimages, worship of the saints, and worship of their images. When we come to inquire how it was that he began to think all these things wrong, whilst everybody else thought them true and right,

we find that it must have been through his study of the Bible. For many years his great work was translating the Bible into English ; and while he was working and studying at that, no doubt he discovered that none of those things were to be found in it, but a great many things which contradicted them.

11. The popes and great Church authorities had by this time fully made up their minds that lay-people had no right to read the Bible. In the old Anglo-Saxon times it had been different, and such people as knew how to read had been encouraged to read their Bibles. But that was hundreds of years ago, and things were much changed by this time. All those strange doctrines and practices had grown up by degrees, and now were much worse than they used to be. Also the clergy had grown more proud, and more anxious to keep the power and influence in their own hands.

12. Thus there was a sort of double reason for their not liking the Bible to be read : one, that people would find that many of their favourite doctrines were quite contrary to it, and would soon leave off believing them ; the other, that it seemed to put the laity more on a level with the clergy, if they were allowed to read and judge for themselves. But we will do them justice, and hope there might be a worthier reason in their minds also ; they perhaps honestly thought plain men could not understand the Scriptures, and might "wrest them," as St. Paul says, "to their own destruction."

**The Church
and the
Bible.**

13. Some time before this, on the Continent, parts of the Bible had been translated into the common language of the country, and the people had been delighted. The clergy, however, were not delighted ; they appealed to the Pope. The Pope seems hardly to have known what to do at first ; it must have appeared very strange for the principal minister of God on earth to tell the people they were not to read God's word. He hesitated for a time, gave them advice, told them to be humble, and so forth. But by and bye, of course, these people who read and loved the Bible found out how different it was from what their priests taught them ; and when they chose to follow their Bibles rather than the priests they were pronounced to be heretics ; their assemblies were broken up, and their Bibles burned. And it became a settled rule of the Church that no layman should read the Bible. This, and the doctrine of transubstantiation combined, gave enormous power to the clergy, and made them seem quite another sort of men from the rest of the world. They

were the only ones who could understand the Scriptures, and the laity might only listen humbly to the parts they chose to read to them, and then, also, listen to how they might explain them. They too were the only ones who could work the great miracle of the sacrament, turning bread and wine into Christ's body and blood. And if these two things were set aside, all their great power would melt away.

14. These were things against which Wycliffe set himself, though he was a clergyman too ; but he loved truth better than power and greatness. He soon found people to agree with him, even some of the clergy ; those he sent about everywhere preaching to the people ; two of the most learned of them he kept to help him translate the Bible. Another clergyman,

Wycliffe's translation.

one of the Church party, wrote about this great work of Wycliffe in these terms. "Christ delivered His gospel to the clergy and doctors of the Church, that they might administer to the laity, and to weaker persons, according to the state of the times and the wants of man. But this Master Jchn Wycliffe translated it out of Latin into English, and thus laid it more open to the laity, and to women who can read, than it formerly had been to the most learned of the clergy. . . And in this way the gospel pearl is cast abroad and trodden underfoot of swine, and that which was before precious both to clergy and laity is rendered, as it were, the common jest of both ! The jewel of the Church is turned into the sport of the people, and what was hitherto the principal gift of the clergy and divines is made for ever common to the laity." There we see the exclusive and sacerdotal spirit in its prime. Were the laity and even women to have a share in what only clergy ought to possess ?

15. Wycliffe and his friends took great pains to get copies of the new translation made, and circulated as widely as possible. But as in those days books had all to be written out by hand, they were very expensive. A New Testament of Wycliffe's version cost, not long after this, £2 16s. 8d., which was as much as twenty or thirty pounds now. How he would have wondered and rejoiced if he had known the day would come when a New Testament might be bought for two or three pence. His is not the same Bible that we have now, because the English language went on altering a good deal after his time, and another translation was made about 200 years later ; but if we took pains we could still read and understand his ; so we could his sermons and tracts. Some of his phrases are very pithy. For the verse

"He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust," he puts "He knew our britil making."

16. The bishops were, of course, very indignant with Wycliffe's doings. They tried all they could to put him and his friends down. When Wycliffe began to attack the doctrines and faith of the Church, John of Gaunt ceased to take his part. He did not wish to alter his belief, or other people's, but only to get the power and wealth of the clergy. For a long time the University of Oxford stood by Wycliffe, but at last it had to give in, and he and his followers were banished from that city. How it was the bishops did him no more harm we can hardly tell. Probably John of Gaunt still protected him personally, though he no longer sided with him; he was also favoured by the good and beloved wife of King Richard II.

He is persecuted.

17. He was permitted to retire to his country living at Lutterworth, and there he spent most of his time in improving his translation of the Bible. At last the English bishops appealed to the Pope, and Wycliffe was summoned to appear at Rome to give an account of himself. But he was now too old and infirm to go, though he said he would cheerfully have gone if possible, for he was always glad to explain his faith to any one, and above all to the Bishop of Rome. Very soon after this, whilst he was performing the service in his church, he was struck with paralysis, and in two days died. Thus the first of our English reformers, though he had a stormy life, had a peaceful death. Persecution had not yet become as cruel in England as it did afterwards; but, as if the Church of Rome repented of its gentleness towards Wycliffe, about forty years later the Pope commanded his bones to be dug up out of his grave, burnt to ashes, and then thrown into a brook. But Foxe remarks upon this, "Though they digged up his body, burned his bones, and drowned his ashes, yet the word of God and the truth of His doctrine they could not burn; which yet to this day do remain, notwithstanding the transitory body and bones of the man were thus consumed and dispersed."

1384.

His death.

18. In the midst of all this stir of thought the old King Edward III. died, having reigned fifty years. His end was as melancholy as William the Conqueror's. He was deserted by all his friends; none even of his children were near him; and his wicked favourite Alice, who had returned after her banishment, stole the very rings off his fingers. The Prince of Wales's young son

1377.

Death of Edward III.

Richard, who was only eleven years old, was made king. Every one thought that his uncle, John of Gaunt, would have very much liked to take his place, and in former times it is probable that he might have done so; for though Henry III. had been made king while still a child, Richard was the first instance of a grandson of the last king succeeding to the throne. But as John of Gaunt was very unpopular, and had made a great many enemies, while every one was disposed to love the young prince for his father's sake, he contented himself with watching his opportunities to get all the power he could.

19. The first very notable thing which befell in Richard II.'s reign was what is sometimes called "the peasants' revolt," and sometimes, in a more dignified way, "the rising of the commons." We have seen how miserably the poor lived, and that, though many had in one way or another become free, the greater number were still serfs or villeins. These poor men, in return for their cottages and little plots of land, had to plough and reap, thrash and winnow, and do many other things for their lords without receiving any wages. They were now, however, beginning to feel their own power, and to murmur against the oppression of their masters. Many of the same class in other countries, especially in Flanders, had already risen in revolt, and those in England were in a very dissatisfied condition. When things are in that state it is like gunpowder only waiting for a match. The government were soon foolish enough to bring the match, to give the provocation which the people could not put up with.

20. The war with France was still going on, and, as usual, there was a great want of money. When it was found that the customary taxes would not bring in enough, a new **The poll-tax.** one was set up, which was called the poll-tax, that is, a tax on everybody's head. The first time this was tried, though every grown person in the country was to pay something, still the richer ones were to pay more than the poorer, and all was clearly laid down. The Duke of Lancaster, who was the highest subject in the kingdom, was to pay most, £6 13s. 4d.; earls were to pay £4, barons £2, and so on down to the lowest; and every one of these, excepting beggars, was to pay a groat, which is 4d., but of course was worth a great deal more then, perhaps about 5s. Still the government did not get enough; next year there was another poll-tax. This time they did not take so much pains in apportioning it. For every one in the country over fifteen years old three groats were to be paid; only it was said, in a general way, that the rich were to help the poor.

When it was left to themselves in that vague manner it was pretty sure the rich would not do more than they could help, and it would fall very heavily on the poor. The tax-collectors too were insolent and rapacious.

21. Here was the spark that set the gunpowder alight. All in a moment, as it were, the gunpowder exploded. The poor people rose, not only in one or two places, but almost all over the kingdom. It seemed as if they could not have had time to plan together, or tell each other their intentions; there were no telegraphs or even post-offices then. But all at once, in counties far and near, the people rose. In Yorkshire, Lancashire, Devonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent the peasants were up in arms. Their leaders were poor men like themselves, "fellows with no surnames." As we saw, the lower orders of people at this time had no family names. The principal leader of the people was a man whose trade was to make tiled roofs, and who was called Wat Tyler. There was also one who had perhaps been a thatcher, as he was called Jack Straw. And another very important one was a priest named John Ball.

22. Froissart, who must have been growing old now, but was still busy writing his history, gives an account of the rising. Though such a great admirer of the knights and lords, he had not much sympathy with the poor, and tells the worst he can of them. Accordingly, he calls Wat Tyler a bad man, and a great enemy to the nobility; and John Ball "a crazy priest." He gives us a specimen of Ball's sermons. "Every Sunday after mass, as the people were coming out of church, this John Ball was accustomed to assemble a crowd around him in the market-place and preach to them. On such occasions he would say, 'My good friends, matters cannot go on well in England until all things shall be in common; when there shall be neither vassals nor lords; when the lords shall be no more masters than ourselves. How ill they behave to us! For what reason do they thus hold us in bondage? Are we not all descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve? And what can they show, or what reason can they give, why they should be more masters than ourselves? They are clothed in velvets and rich stuffs, ornamented with ermine and other furs, while we are forced to wear poor clothing. They have wines, spices, and fine bread, while we have only rye and the refuse of the straw. They have handsome seats and manors, while we must brave the wind and rain in our labours in the

1381.

Rising of
the peasants.

Wat Tyler.

John Ball.

fields, and it is by our labour they have wherewith to support their pomp. We are called slaves, and if we do not perform our service we are beaten. . . ." There seems so much truth and sense in some of this that one wonders Froissart could write it down without perceiving it too. The same Archbishop of Canterbury who had suspended Wycliffe put John Ball in prison for two or three months, but as soon as he came out he began preaching again as before. It is said that his favourite text to these sermons was a rhyme—

"When Adam delved and Evē span,
Who was then a gentleman?"

In the old Bible pictures, such as most likely were painted on all the church walls at that time, they always showed Adam and Eve digging and spinning, so the people would quite understand that rhyme.

23. Froissart, as we see, had no sympathy for these people, nor had Gower the poet. He was a rich gentleman living in Kent, where the worst of the rioting was; so he was all in the midst of it, and perhaps was terribly frightened. He wrote a good deal about it, sometimes satirically, and at others indignantly. He compares the peasants to oxen and asses. "Asses, disdaining the curb, rose like wild lions to seek their prey, and, leaping about the fields, terrified all the citizens with their wild hee-aw. They would no longer carry sacks into the town, nor bend their backs to any burden. They claim to be lodged and combed like horses. . . Ox is a lion; ox is a leopard; ox is a bear; but his old character ox he has forgotten." Still he thinks the revolt would not have happened had there not been great evils in the land.

24. At last then the people rose in troops and resolved to free themselves. As one might expect, they did a great many bad things even at first; but, for an oppressed and down-trodden mob, it seems wonderful they did no worse. They burst into the manor-houses and ransacked them. When they found the lists of the villeins on each estate, and the work they were bound to do, they burnt them. They put to death a great many lawyers and other officials, whom they looked on (perhaps very truly) as their oppressors, and burnt their houses. Wat Tyler and John Ball, with a great troop behind them, marched up from Dartford in Kent to Blackheath; and the rich men in London, in great alarm, shut the city gates, and tried to keep them from crossing London Bridge.

25. But as many of the lower people in London were on their side, and as also there was much fear that the mob would burn down the fine houses and suburbs outside the city gates, they were obliged after a time to let them in. **The revolt-ers in London.** Though these people were very ignorant, wild, and rude, they were Englishmen; and Englishmen are by nature neither cruel, bloodthirsty, nor lawless. The most of them did not mean any harm; they sent messages to the young king, saying that they respected and would obey him, but that they must tell him their grievances, and hope he would set them right.

26. The worst mischief was, that after they got into London they took to drink. At first "they did no hurt, and took nothing from any man." But, out of fear or false kindness people set a great deal of meat and drink before them, and when they had once tasted the strong wine they thought they could never have enough of it. Then they grew wild and violent. They had a great hatred of John of Gaunt, and declared they would never have a king named John. They now seized on his palace, the Savoy Palace, in which the French king had lived so long, and set fire to it; though it was full of silver and gold and jewels they did not steal anything; and one man, who was found carrying some valuables away, they put to death as a thief; but, unfortunately, they drank a great quantity of his wine.

27. In their excitement they now killed a great many men, and a horrible night was spent in London; murder and drink on one side, and terror and fury on the other. When morning came it was thought best to try and appease them, and, as they had demanded to see the king, it was agreed that he should go and meet them. Accordingly, Richard, who was now about fifteen or sixteen, and was a spirited **The young king.** young fellow, sent word to them to retire to "a handsome meadow at Mile-End, where in the summer-time people go to amuse themselves," and he would meet them there. About 60,000 of the peasants assembled. They must have been sober by this time, for they behaved very well.

They made four petitions to the king, and very reasonable petitions they were. The first was that they should be set free for ever, they and their children; they would no longer be called slaves nor held in bondage. Secondly, that a free pardon should be granted to all. Thirdly, that they might buy and sell in any market that they liked. And fourthly, that good land must

only be let at fourpence an acre. That last sounds absurd to us now, but there were reasons which made it not so absurd then.

28. King Richard promised to grant all their demands, and, speaking very calmly and sensibly to them, "his word greatly appeased the more moderate of the multitude, who said, 'It is well; we wish for nothing more.'" Great numbers of them then returned quietly to their homes, and no one can deny that they had behaved wonderfully well.

29. Meanwhile, unhappily, a great part of the mob had not gone to Mile-End at all, but had stayed rioting in London. Whilst the king's back was turned, some of the lawyers and other men were murdered; especially the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had put John Ball in prison. The rabble went on drinking Rhenish wine and Malmsey Madeira. Moreover, many of those who remained would not be content with what the king had promised, but had a great number of wicked schemes in their heads; or, at least, so Jack Straw is said to have confessed afterwards.

30. The next day the king, with only about sixty followers, fell in with a great body of the insurgents at Smithfield, and, seeming still anxious to pacify them, had some talk with their leader. But Wat Tyler behaving insolently, and threatening one of the king's attendants, the Mayor of London, William Walworth, who was in Richard's train, struck him from his horse, and he was killed. Upon seeing this his followers set themselves in battle array, and bent their bows. It was a perilous moment; but the young king, with rare spirit and courage, rode boldly forward alone, saying, "I am your king; I will be your leader." The rioters, struck with admiration or shame, attempted no further violence, but really followed the king. Soon a large body of citizens hastened to the spot to protect him, and the crowds, at Richard's command, quietly returned home. Thus ended the revolt; for the insurgents in the other counties, hearing how those in London had submitted, for the most part dispersed of themselves; the others were put down by force.

31. The worst part of the story is still to be told. None of the king's fair promises were kept. As to the free pardon that

had been granted, not only were the leaders, John Ball and Jack Straw, caught and beheaded, but a great many others were executed also, in all, it is said, as many as 1500. We must not lay all the blame of this on Richard. For one thing, his pardon had been granted before he knew of the murder of the archbishop and the others,

End of
the revolt.

which took place in his absence. Perhaps, too, he would have liked to keep his promise about freeing the villeins, for when parliament met he begged them to consider the propriety of abolishing the system of serfdom, or villeinage. But parliament refused; they said "no one should rob them of their villeins."

32. Thus it would seem as if all had been in vain. But it was not so really; the insurrection bore fruit. The poll-tax was entirely done away with; that was one good fruit.

Another was, that though the masters would not, **Results.** in so many words, set the villeins free, it appears that the spirit the men had shown made them a great deal more careful as to their treatment; they did not dare any longer to demand the services they had been used to, fearing the men would refuse to obey. Gradually they perhaps saw how much better the other plan of hiring and paying labourers worked. Thus, at the end of fifty years from the plague of the Black Death, the freedom of the English serfs was secured. The long struggle of the labourers succeeded at last, and every Englishman was free.

33. Before leaving this subject we will notice for a moment how the same conflict went on in France. There, too, the peasants had been oppressed, far more than in England indeed; the serfs had been treated like beasts of burden. They rose up at last against their oppressors, plundered and burnt their castles, and massacred the nobles, men, women, and children, wherever they could find them. The English revolvers did nothing at all like this; there was nothing which could be called a "massacre." We think the English government was very unjust and cruel in the punishments it inflicted, but it was mild and merciful compared with the French. The way the poor miserable peasants were treated makes one's blood run cold. The dauphin on one occasion killed 20,000 of them; they were cut down in heaps, crushed to death, and slaughtered like wild beasts. In some parts the whole country was cleared of them by the savage butchery of the knights and lords.

But what was the result? In England, as we have just seen, it was not very long before justice and the right prevailed; neither rich nor poor had any such horrible things to remember, or wrongs to avenge on either side. The English nation went on, more or less peacefully, growing in liberty and unity. The French nobles, no doubt, thought they had "stamped out" the rebellion. They continued century after century to treat the poor as badly as ever, and at last came the frightful explosion of the French Revolution.

LECTURE XXXII.—RICHARD THE REDELESS.

Character of Richard. His uncles. Troubles of the reign. Death of the Duke of Gloucester. Richard aims at absolute power. Henry of Lancaster. His banishment. His return. Deposition of Richard.

1. RICHARD'S behaviour at the time of the revolt showed great presence of mind, courage, and a certain generosity, and it might have been hoped that a young boy possessing these qualities would grow into a fine and noble king. But it was not so; for though he was handsome, clever, and affectionate, as well as high-spirited, he grew up headstrong, proud, self-willed, and very revengeful; he had been spoiled by flattery and ill-management in his youth, and never learned how to govern himself; far less, therefore, could he govern a great kingdom. He soon gained the title of Richard the Redeless, which has just the same meaning as the old nickname of Ethelred the Unready, the unwise or uncounselled one.

2. While he was still young his uncles strove to get all the power they could, and gave great offence to the king. We have

**The king's
uncles.**

already heard about John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and how he had set every one against him by his pride and extravagance, and how he cared for nothing but pleasing the rich courtiers, so that the peasants had burned down his palace, and declared they would never have a king named John. This must have shown him how utterly he was hated, and that there was no hope of his ever being king; and after that he seems to have quite altered his conduct, and to have become a peace-maker rather than a disturber. In Shakespeare's play of *Richard II.* John of Gaunt appears as a very noble character and great lover of his country, but this picture would only have been true of him in his later years.

3. Another younger son of Edward III. was the Duke of York. He does not seem to have been clever like his brothers, nor ever to have quite known his own mind, or what side he meant to take; as we may read also in Shakespeare's play. It

is important to remember these two dukes, because it was their descendants who caused the dreadful civil wars, of which we shall soon have to hear, between the houses of Lancaster and York.

4. The youngest uncle of the king was the Duke of Gloucester. He was clever and ambitious, and as soon as John of Gaunt retired he got most of the power into his own hands. Richard made favourites, as Edward II. had done, and they were hated and looked on as upstarts, just as Gaveston and Hugh le Despenser had been. The Duke of Gloucester gained great influence with the parliament, and encouraged them to make a dead set against these favourites, and to call on the king to dismiss them. Richard, the spoilt child, was growing up very haughty and arrogant, and he replied that for such men as the members of parliament he would not dismiss the meanest servant in his kitchen.

5. But by this time parliament was so powerful that it was no use treating them in this high-handed way. Richard had to give in. Not only were his ministers dismissed and banished, but a new sort of government was appointed, with the Duke of Gloucester at its head, and making Richard a mere puppet. The Duke of Gloucester in his turn used his power very tyrannically; a great many knights, judges, and others whom he looked on as his enemies were put to death, and when the king attempted to interfere the Duke led an army of 40,000 men against him. Richard had to yield once more, and his friends to fly for their lives.

6. Before long, however, Gloucester's power came to an end. One day, in the midst of a great council, the king, turning suddenly to the duke, said, "Uncle, how old am I?" "Your highness," replied the duke, "is in your twenty-second year." "Then," said Richard, "I must certainly be old enough to manage my own affairs; I am much obliged to you, my lords, for your past services, but I want them no longer." So he put down the Duke of Gloucester's ministers, and set up others in their stead, and governed the country himself. Things went on very quietly for eight years; but all that time he kept in his own heart the determination to be revenged on his uncle and those who had supported him.

7. During this quiet time he made an effort to subdue and tame the people of Ireland. They were still as wild as they had been in the days of Henry II. Even the Englishmen who had settled down in the country had

1387.

1389.
Richard
assumes the
authority.

Ireland.

become quite as uncivilized as the natives, and had learnt all their ways. Richard showed great skill and good sense in his way of treating them, and by a mixture of firmness and gentleness he brought the island for the time to obedience and a sort of order. The four Irish kings did homage to him. He treated them with kindness and courtesy, knighted them, and tried to civilize them. The English gentleman who was intrusted with the task of teaching them good manners gave a very droll account of his difficulties, and the pains he took to break them of their uncouth habits; such as making grimaces as they sat at table, and eating out of the same plates as their servants and minstrels. He tried to make them wear dresses like English princes, of silk and fur; but he could not succeed very well, and complains that they would frequently return to "their coarse behaviour." And when, after nine months, Richard went back to England, after doing what he could to establish justice and peace, all the Irish did as the four kings did, and returned to their wild and lawless ways.

8. While quite young the king had married a princess of Bohemia, whom he dearly loved, and whom all the country loved. She was called the "good Queen Anne;" it was she who was the friend and protector of Wycliffe; and it was probably through her that Wycliffe's doctrines were carried to Bohemia, and took root there. There is no doubt that many of his books were sent to Bohemia, some of which are said to remain even now in an ancient library at Prague. John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who were some of the earliest reformers on the continent of Europe, probably learnt their doctrines in that way. In England, however, the teaching of Wycliffe fell into great disfavour after the peasants' revolt, because it was generally believed that some of his followers, if not he himself, had favoured the preaching and opinions of John Ball; and the son of John of Gaunt, Wycliffe's early protector, afterwards became a cruel persecutor of those who followed his doctrines.

9. Nevertheless the conflict with the Pope on temporal matters went on as vigorously as ever, and a law was passed which was called the Statute of Præmunire, ordering heavy punishment to any one who should venture to bring in his bulls, or exercise any authority in his name, in the kingdom of England.

Not long after this the good Queen Anne died; and when, at the end of two years, Richard chose a new wife, his choice was

very displeasing to the country and to the Duke of Gloucester. The French war was still going on, and Richard wished to put an end to it by marrying a French princess. Strange to say, in spite of the heavy taxes and distress, the English were not at all anxious for peace. They greatly preferred continuing the war; they had never suffered from it as the French did, because it was all carried on in France, though the French had once or twice tried to invade England.

Richard becomes unpopular.

10. Froissart tells us how they would say, "Why should we not for once make a visit to England, and learn the way thither, as the English have learnt the way into France? Let us go and see how they behave." They believed that if they did so "England would be ruined and destroyed beyond resource, the men put to death, and the women and children carried in slavery to France." We can fancy the English saying in return, as he tells us, "Let them come, and not a soul of them shall return to tell the story!" Once or twice a French army did really land somewhere in England, and ravaged a little, but no great harm came of it.

11. The English, therefore, still wished to carry on the war, and were angry with Richard for making a truce for twenty-five years, and for marrying the French princess, who was a little girl of eight years old. The Duke of Gloucester, in particular, declaimed loudly against it. Now was the time when Richard took the revenge he had nursed so long. The Duke and his friends were treacherously seized and imprisoned. Gloucester was sent to the castle in Calais, and never appeared again. It was given out that the duke died of apoplexy; but everybody was sure in their hearts that he was murdered by the king's orders. All this caused a great uproar; the two other dukes prepared to avenge their brother's death, and it was with great difficulty that a sort of peace was made. And when peace was restored "the King of England," says Froissart, "governed more fiercely than before. . . . He now assumed greater state than ever kings of England had done, nor had there been any one who expended such large sums of money. . . . At this period there was no one, however great, in England who dared speak his sentiments on what the king did or intended doing."

His arbitrary government.

12. The fact was, Richard desired to be an absolute monarch. We have seen how the different classes in the country—the lords, the commons, and the Church—had all at different times and in

their several ways been striving for centuries to limit the power of the king, and make him govern, not according to his own will, but according to the law of the land; how they had made John sign the charter; how they had given more and more power to the parliament; how they had prevented the king from laying on taxes without the consent of parliament; how parliament never would consent when the king was doing anything to displease them. Richard wished to undo all this work, and for a time he even seemed to be succeeding.

13. But it was only a sort of calm before a storm. It was not likely that a nation with such a history, which had stood up for its liberty and its rights so valiantly, was going to resign them at a word. Richard contrived, moreover, to make himself a dangerous enemy, and give his opponents the very head they wanted, by his arbitrary way of proceeding.

14. Though Richard had been made king without any opposition, and John of Gaunt passed over, there was likely to be a difficulty in appointing his successor; for he had no children, and the question arose who was to be his heir. We should say now without a doubt, if there were no descendants of Edward III.'s eldest son, the right would next come to the descendants of his second son. And so said Richard. The brother next to the Black Prince was the Duke of Clarence, who had been long dead. But neither had he left a son, only a daughter; still the children of that daughter had the next right to the throne. She had married Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, and Richard declared her grandson to be his heir. Thus, as we may say, John of Gaunt and his son were quite put out of court.

15. But Richard seems to have had an uneasy feeling about his cousin Henry, John of Gaunt's son. He was a clever man, and much liked by the country. Shakespeare tells how Richard observed the way he courted the common people, and tried to win their regard by being wonderfully polite to them.

"How he did seem to dive into their hearts
With humble and familiar courtesy;
What reverence he did throw away on slaves;"

how he would pull off his hat to a fish-woman, and make polite speeches to a drayman, and so on. If he did so, no doubt the people would remark the contrast between him and the king who was "governing so fiercely."

We may just notice that in the play we find this Henry

called by a good many different names—Bolingbroke, Derby, Hereford, and Lancaster. Those were all different titles of his, and the most important one to remember is Lancaster, which he assumed after his father's death, because when he came to be king he and his son and grandson are called the House of Lancaster.

16. Now Henry and one of the principal nobles, who had formerly opposed the king, the Duke of Norfolk, had a great quarrel. The Duke of Norfolk declared that Henry had used treasonable words about his cousin the king. Henry in his turn accused Norfolk of being the traitor. As they both persisted in declaring their own innocence, and the other's guilt, it was decided to appeal to the wager of battle. The two were to meet fully armed and to fight it out, and whichever conquered would be declared to be innocent according to the custom of that day. To us this appears just the same as saying that a great strong man with good armour, a powerful horse, and a skilful arm was always right; and a weak man with a poorer horse, or not such a well-tempered sword, was always wrong; but the idea was not really so irrational or foolish as that; it was founded on the very same belief on which so many of their other opinions were founded—that God was constantly interfering to work miracles in the affairs of men. They thought that if the two champions solemnly appealed to Him, He would if needful work a miracle, and let the weaker one vanquish the stronger, if the right lay on his side.

17. These two great lords then appeared before the king and all the court dressed in splendid armour, and ready to fight on this quarrel. But just before the fight began the king interfered; he forbade the duel and laid a heavy punishment on both. The Duke of Norfolk he banished from the kingdom for ever; his cousin Henry for ten years, which he afterwards altered to six. He had perhaps reason for believing that there had been some truth in what each had said of the other, and that he would be all the safer with both of them out of the country. No one dared resist, and the two dukes left England.

18. Soon after this old John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, died, and then Richard did the last infatuated act, which brought matters to a crisis. Instead of allowing his banished cousin to succeed to his father's property, Richard seized on everything for himself. He sent officers to take possession of his lands and to gather

His banishment.

Richard seizes his inheritance.

the rents ; and he gave away some of the estates altogether. It must be remembered that nothing had ever been proved against Henry ; and indeed Froissart says " he prided himself on being one of the most loyal knights in the universe." Therefore the unjust seizing of his inheritance made every one in England very indignant.

19. At this moment, when he had put himself so thoroughly in the wrong, Richard left the country and once more proceeded to Ireland. That unfortunate island was again in a very bad and troubled state, and sorely wanted setting to rights ; but Richard had better have stayed at home and looked after England just now. He left behind as regent his uncle the Duke of York, who, besides being naturally of an irresolute character, was very old by this time.

20. This was the opportunity for Henry of Lancaster. While he was in exile he had made friends with another very important person, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom the despotic Richard had also banished. These two now determined to come home again. Henry landed at Ravenspur in Yorkshire (a place which has long since been washed away by the sea), professing that he was only come to claim his own inheritance. Almost every one took his part, especially the great lords of the north, the Earl of Northumberland and the Earl of Westmoreland. The Duke of York, after wavering for some time, at last also took the side of Henry, who was his nephew as well as Richard ; though it soon became very evident that he would not rest satisfied with his father's possessions, but aimed at being king himself.

21. Richard, being away in Ireland, heard nothing of all that was going on for a long time. When he did hear of it, contrary winds prevented him from crossing the sea : in those days when there were no steamers everything depended on the way the wind blew. By the time he did at last come back all was lost. His own men forsook him without striking a blow. Richard disguised himself as a priest, and wandered about with his few friends seeking help and finding none. At last he went to Conway in Wales, where the Earl of Northumberland was, and surrendered himself. It seemed as if all his great pride melted out of him at once. He saw very well that his day was past, and his cousin's day was begun.

22. He was quite humble and consented to everything. He was taken to London, where he rode through the streets on

a wretched horse, while Henry rode on one of Richard's own favourite chargers. He was then taken to the Tower, and parliament was summoned. The day before it met, the archbishop, who had returned from banishment, and the Earl of Northumberland made the unfortunate Richard sign a paper, saying that he resigned the crown, and absolved the people from their allegiance. He also said, that if he could have had leave to appoint a successor, he should have chosen his cousin Henry.

1399.
Deposition of
Richard.

23. The next day this paper was read to the parliament, and also Richard's coronation oath, the oath in which he had sworn to rule justly, to keep the charters and respect the laws. After this a long list of grievances was read, to show that he had broken that oath, and oppressed the people; that he had laid on taxes illegally, that he had claimed to make and alter the laws according to his own will, that he had taken away the power of parliament, that he had deceived and put to death his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, that he had been most unjust to his cousin Henry, and many other charges. Any one could see what was to be the end. Richard was deposed and imprisoned. Henry was made king by both archbishops, by the whole parliament, and by the voice of the country.

LECTURE XXXIII.—HENRY OF LANCASTER.

The Lollards. Persecution. Prince Harry. The Border Wars. Percy and Douglas. Owen Glendower. Battle of Shrewsbury. The King of Scotland.

1. It might appear that the choice of parliament and of the nation gave Henry IV. a very good title to be king ; and if our monarchy were an elective one, no one could have wished for a better. But, from of old, it could neither be said to be strictly elective nor strictly hereditary. According to the old custom, when the country used to *elect its king out of the royal family*, Henry would have been in as good a position as King Alfred himself had Richard been dead. But since the feudal system had grown up people had come to think less of election and more of the hereditary right of the king, and Henry had not that right.

2. Thus from the very first he had two great fears and rivals. As long as King Richard was alive no one could tell that his friends and the people might not rise in his favour, and restore him to his throne. We might feel sure then that Richard would not lie long in prison. Just as when the Duke of Gloucester had been imprisoned by him and never appeared again, but died no one knew how, so it was with himself now his turn was come. It was soon announced that he was dead, and of course it was believed (most likely truly) that he was privately murdered by the king's order, or permission, though for a long time after reports used to be spread abroad that he was alive, which kept Henry in constant alarm.

3. Then, too, there was the young Mortimer, who according to the laws of inheritance was the real heir, and who was as yet quite a child. Henry had taken possession of him, and kept him as a sort of honourable prisoner in the court, where he received a good education, and was very well treated. Still, this was another danger, for any day Henry's enemies might try to take him away and make him king, as indeed they did after a time.

4. Thus it was by no means a bed of roses that Henry prepared for himself when he aspired to be King of England, and he had to try to please and conciliate all parties in order to secure his position. Above all, through his whole reign he took great care never to get into any disputes with the parliament, to which he owed his crown.

5. Almost the first act of his reign was one which is very pleasant to hear of; it was a mark of kindness and favour bestowed upon the aged poet Chaucer, whom he had doubtless known well all his life, from the time when his father used to patronize him long ago. Richard was deposed on the 30th of September, and on the 3rd of October the new king doubled Chaucer's pension, giving him a sum which would have made him very comfortable for the rest of his life, though he only lived one year to enjoy it.

6. Though he showed himself thus generous and grateful to his father's old friend and his country's great glory, he had no such kind feelings to the other famous man, whom John of Gaunt had at one time protected, John Wycliffe. The worst thing in all his reign is that he most cruelly persecuted his disciples. Wycliffe himself, as we saw, died a peaceful death, but he had left many followers, whom the Church of Rome desired to suppress and punish. These followers of Wycliffe were called the Lollards. No one is quite sure what that

word meant, but it was doubtless a term of contempt. It probably came from the word "loll," ^{The} **Lollards.** and at first meant a sluggard or lazy person who lived at other people's expense rather than by his own labour, though this would have been a most unjust charge against Wycliffe's disciples. Great numbers of people agreed with Wycliffe in his indignation against the tyranny of the Pope, the worldliness of the clergy, and the covetousness of the friars. Some, though not so many, agreed with him in his protest against the doctrines of the Roman Church, and in his efforts to promote true religion, humility, and charity. This is part of a description which I have read of them, said to be written not by one of their friends, but by a Roman inquisitor. "The disciples of Wycliffe are men of a serious, modest deportment, they avoid all ostentation in dress, mix little with the busy world, and complain of the wickedness of mankind. They maintain themselves entirely by their own labour, despising wealth, being fully content with mere necessities . . . they are chaste and temperate, never seen in taverns nor amused by vain pleasures. You find them always employed either learning

or teaching. They never swear, they speak little; in public preaching they lay the chief stress upon charity."

7. Nevertheless, though Wycliffe's teaching bore such fruit as this, the archbishops, bishops, and other high dignitaries did all

they could to stop it, and to oppress these harmless

Persecution.

men. Henry, perhaps, in order to propitiate them and win their favour in his difficult position, was very ready to help them. One of the first laws passed in his reign was a shameful one, commanding that "heretics" should be burned alive. Before Henry had been king two years the first of these "heretics" as they called them, "martyrs" as we call them, was burned in Smithfield. He was a London clergyman named William Sawtre, and the principal charge brought against him, was denying the doctrine of transubstantiation and the worship of the cross. He said that he would not worship the cross on which Christ suffered, but Christ who suffered on the cross.

8. Before he could be put to death it was necessary formally to degrade him from his position as a clergyman. The secular courts were not allowed to punish a Churchman, and the ecclesiastical courts could not punish with death. The priest then had to be made into a layman before the cruel purpose could be executed. The archbishop and six bishops met in St. Paul's Church, and the "heretic" was brought before them. Step by step he was degraded from one office after another which he had held in the Church. First the priestly vestment and the sacramental cup were taken from him, and he was no longer a priest but a deacon; then the New Testament and the deacon's stole were taken, and he was only a sub-deacon; one sacred thing after another, the alb, the candlestick, the taper, the lectionary, were taken away, till he stood only as a sacristan or sexton, wearing a surplice, and holding the church key in his hand. These also were removed, the marks of the "tonsure" or shaven crown of his head were done away with, and he was now a mere layman. What did he feel, what did those pitiless bishops feel, as the terrible ceremony went slowly on? We do not know, but we know the dishonoured and discredited victim was faithful unto death. The archbishop handed him over to the secular power, to the high constable and marshall of England, with the hypocritical entreaty that they would receive him favourably, for the Roman Church always delivered over its victims with a recommendation to mercy, and

William Sawtre was burnt at the stake. We all
1401. know how many noble and brave men suffered the

like in after times ; but we ought not to forget this first one, who died for conscience' sake.

9. Henry IV. had several sons, the eldest of whom is a very famous character. He is often called "Harry Madcap," on account of the gay, wild life he led when he was young. It is not known quite certainly whether he really was as "madcap" as he is reputed to have been, for it is mostly in Shakespeare's plays that we find this description of him, and many historians doubt if it is true. But as long as people read Shakespeare, and that will be as long as the English language lasts, nobody will ever be able to think of Prince Harry except as a wild, witty, dissipated prince, with some touches of better things about him, which gave a sort of promise of his future glory.

Prince
Harry.

10. There is one very famous story about him which shows both sides of his character, and which is well told by Sir John Elyot, but as he lived more than 100 years later, it is by no means certain that the story is true. It is, however, too interesting and characteristic to be omitted. "The most renowned prince, King Henry V., during the life of his father was noted to be fierce, and of wanton courage ; it happened that one of his servants whom he well favoured was, for felony by him committed, arraigned at the King's Bench. Whereof the prince being advertised, and incensed by light persons about him, in furious rage came hastily to the bar, where his servant stood as a prisoner, and commanded him to be ungyved and set at liberty ; whereat all men were abashed, saving the chief justice, who humbly exhorted the prince that his servant might be ordered according to the ancient laws of this realm ; or if he would have him saved from the rigour of the laws, that he should obtain, if he might, of the king his father, his gracious pardon, whereby no law or justice should be derogate. With which answer the prince, nothing appeased, but rather more inflamed, endeavoured himself to take away his servant.

"The judge, considering the perilous example and inconvenience that might ensue, with a valiant spirit and courage, commanded the prince, upon his allegiance, to leave the prisoner, and depart his way. With which commandment the prince, being set all in a fury, all chafed and in a terrible manner came up to the place of judgment, men thinking that he would have slain the judge, or have done to him some damage. But the judge, sitting still without moving, declaring the majesty of the king's place of judgment, and with an assured and bold countenance, said to the

prince these words following : Sir, remember yourself : I keep here the place of the king, your sovereign lord and father, to whom ye owe double obedience ; wherefore eftsooné, in his name, I charge you, desist of your wilfulness, and unlawful enterprise, and from henceforth give good example to those which hereafter shall be your own subjects. . . . And now, for your contempt and disobedience, go you to the prison of the King's Bench, whereunto I commit you, and remain ye there prisoner, until the pleasure of the king your father be farther known.' With which words being abashed, and also wondering at the marvellous gravity of the worshipful justice, the noble prince, laying his weapon apart, doing reverence, departed, and went to the King's Bench as he was commanded.

"Whereat his servants, disdainig, came and showed to the king all the whole affair ; whereat he, awhile studying, after, as a man all ravished with gladness, holding his eyes and hands up to heaven, abraided,* saying with a loud voice, ' O merciful God, how much am I, above all other men, bound to your infinite goodness, specially for that ye have given me a judge who feareth not to minister justice, and also a son who can suffer semblably, and obey justice.' "

11. Other storms speedily arose to trouble Henry's reign. The first began in Wales. It was more than 100 years since

Troubles in Wales. Edward I. had conquered that little country ; but the people had not submitted willingly, nor ceased to hate their conquerors. A Welsh gentleman,

named Owen Glendower, who was said to be descended from the last Welsh king, Llewellyn, and who took offence at what he considered ill-treatment from Henry, rose in rebellion, roused up the people, and made war on the English. He had at first great success, and took prisoner Edward Mortimer, the uncle of the little heir. Henry marched against him ; but Wales, with its mountains and marshes, was a very difficult country for English soldiers to fight in ; and this being the autumn season, there were so many storms and so much snow that the king had to draw back. The snow and the storms came in so well to help the Welsh that Owen gained the character of a great magician, who could govern the weather as it suited him.

12. Besides the Welsh, Henry had enemies both in the French and the Scotch. To please the English nobles, he had, indeed, determined to carry on the war with the French, which Richard had tried to put an end to ; and the Scotch, as usual, were on the side of France.

Troubles on the borders.

* *abraided*, broke suddenly into speech.

There was seldom now any fighting with Scotland on a grand scale, as in the days of Wallace and Bruce; it was principally a kind of marauding war that was carried on along the borders. There were two great families especially who were always fighting in these parts: on the Scotch side the Douglasses, and on the English the Percies, at whose head was the Earl of Northumberland.

13. It appears that both parties thoroughly enjoyed this state of things. One old writer tells how they would fight with the utmost valour, till "sword and lance could endure no longer," and then they would part from each other, saying, "Good day, and thanks for the sport you have shown;" or, as Froissart said, "they so glorify in their deeds of arms, and are so joyful, that, at their departing, courteously they will say, 'God thank you.'" It was one of these little battles that was sung about in our splendid old ballad of 'Chevy Chase,' or 'the Chase of the Cheviots.'

14. The Earl of Northumberland, who had helped Henry IV. to the throne, had a very famous son, Henry Percy, who, because of his impetuosity and fiery character, was called Hotspur, and who is described in Shakespeare as **The Percies**. "the Hotspur of the north; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, Fie upon this quiet life."

15. Just about this time the Percies and the Douglasses had a greater battle than usual, at a place called Homildon Hill, where the Scotch were totally defeated, and Douglas and some other very important Scotch nobles made prisoners. The custom in those times was, that if a man of rank and consequence were made prisoner, he would pay a large sum of money to be set free, and the Percies expected to receive a heavy ransom for these Scotchmen. But the king interfered; he took one of their prisoners away from them, and demanded that the ransom of the rest should be paid to him, and not to the Percies.

16. Hotspur's fiery blood would not stand this. In the greatest fury and indignation he renounced the king's cause, complained bitterly of his ingratitude for the services he and his father had rendered to him, and determined to join his enemies. The first of these with whom he made friends was his own prisoner, the Scotch Douglas, with whom he had always been fighting hitherto. Then he thought of the Welshman Owen Glendower, who had done the very same thing with his prisoner Mortimer. All these now allied themselves together

against the King of England ; though, if we are to believe Shakespeare, the impetuous, rough, and plain-spoken Hotspur did not get on very well with Owen Glendower, who was pompous, prosy, and pretentious.

17. Thus there was a formidable combination against Henry : Wales and Scotland with France backing them up, and, worse still, rebels at home. The Percies were soon joined by other English nobles who had been Richard's old friends, and especially by Scrope, the Archbishop of York. The king, however, was prompt and determined ; he soon collected a large army. Prince Henry, who, with all his frolics, could be brave and in earnest when needful, helped his father. The king had also another clever and courageous young son named John, who afterwards became very distinguished. With them he marched against the rebels. They met at Shrewsbury where a great battle was fought, in which the rebels were defeated and Henry Hotspur killed.

1403.
Battle of
Shrewsbury.

18. The rebellion was crushed for a time, but before long it broke out again. A lady contrived to steal the young Mortimer out of Windsor Castle, and to flee away with him, but they were soon overtaken, and the prince brought back. After a time the principal conspirators were taken prisoners and put to death ; even the Archbishop of York was beheaded. Though more than

one archbishop had been murdered in England before now, this was the first time that a great Churchman had been executed by the law, and it caused great indignation in the country. Pious people began to make pilgrimages to his tomb, and it was soon reported that miracles were worked there.

1405.

19. By degrees, however, in one way or another, all the great dangers which had threatened Henry passed away. His principal enemy in France, the Duke of Orleans, was murdered, and the Duke of Burgundy, who succeeded to his power and influence, was inclined to be friendly to England. So that Owen Glendower and his Welshmen were left without the help of France, and could do no more harm. The Earl of Northumberland was defeated once more and killed. And Scotland had to be quiet, for Henry contrived to get into his power a most important person, no other than the King of Scotland himself.

20. All Robert Bruce's descendants in the male line had died out by this time, and the family of one of his daughters had been called to the throne. This daughter had married a great nobleman, the high steward of the kingdom. We saw that it was customary in those days to sur-

The King
of Scotland.

name men after their trade or business. Though this was most generally done among the lower orders, it was also sometimes the case in higher ranks, and the lord steward's children and grandchildren came to be called Stewart as their family name. This was the beginning of the royal line of the Stewarts, some of whom were afterwards kings of England.

21. Scotland was in a very miserable condition. The kings were not strong enough to keep order, and there were constant tumults, fights, and murders. The king's eldest son had been murdered, and it was thought wise to send the next son, who was now heir to the kingdom, to be educated in France. But on his way thither some English vessels fell in with his ship, took possession of the young Prince James, and brought him to Henry. Though England and Scotland were now at peace, Henry would not let the boy go away. He said, in a sort of grim joke, that "if the prince was to learn French he could learn it quite as well in his court as in France, for that he himself knew French very well." The Scotch prince very soon after became king through the death of his father, but even then Henry would not set him free.

22. He did not treat him ill, but gave him an excellent education, as he had promised, and the young king grew up clever, accomplished, and good. He was even a true poet. After Chaucer died there had been no one to take his place. The Englishmen who tried to write poetry made very dull work of it for some time after this ; but James of Scotland wrote real poetry, which we may still enjoy reading. While he was a prisoner in England he fell in love with an English lady, a relation of the king's, about whom he made some beautiful poetry. After a time he was allowed to marry this lady. The marriage was performed in St. Saviour's Church in Southwark, close to London Bridge, which was then called St. Mary Overy's, and it proved a very happy one. He went back to Scotland at last, when he had been in England for eighteen years, and was one of the best kings the Scotch ever had. So good and just, indeed, was he that the turbulent nobles would not submit to him ; they rebelled, and finally murdered him, his faithful English wife defending him to the last.

23. After all his anxieties, Henry IV. did not live long to enjoy the peace which followed. He fell into very bad health, and was liable to terrible fits. He had all through his reign been wishing to go to the Holy Land and fight a Crusade ; for though the Crusades had long been at an end really, the thought

and the dream of winning back the Lord's sepulchre had not yet died away. It is probable that his conscience stung him sometimes for the way in which he had treated his cousin Richard, and that he thought to make amends in that way. There had been a prophecy about him too that he should die in Jerusalem.

24. At last one day he was praying in Westminster Abbey before the shrine of Edward the Confessor, when he was seized

1413.
Death of
Henry.

with a fit. There was a chamber in the abbey, as there is still, called the Jerusalem Chamber; because in the days of Richard II. it was hung with tapestry, representing the story of the siege of Jerusalem. It chanced that the sick king was carried into this room. When he came to himself he asked where he was, and on being told that he was in the "Jerusalem Chamber," he exclaimed, "Laud be to the Father of heaven! for now I know that I shall die in this chamber, according to the prophecy made of me aforesaid, that I should die in Jerusalem." And there indeed he died.

LECTURE XXXIV.—THE CONQUEST OF FRANCE.

Character of Henry V. Lord Cobham and the Lollards. The war with France. Harfleur. Battle of Agincourt. Rouen. Treaty of Troyes. The king's marriage. His death and burial.

1. THOUGH the Prince of Wales, who now became king as Henry V., had been wild and dissipated and headstrong, there had always been glimpses of a high and noble nature about him; and everybody was now willing to overlook his youthful follies, and to accept him with good hopes as their king. We shall see how thoroughly he altered from this time, as is not uncommon in a man of strong character, when, just as he is passing from youth to manhood, a great crisis occurs in his life. All the vigour he had formerly poured into his gaieties and follies he now turned to serious matters, so that England never, perhaps, had a more firm, brave, clever, and religious king than Harry Madcap.

1413.
Henry V.

2. In the first acts of his reign he showed a generous spirit towards those whom his father had regarded with dread and jealousy. The legal heir to the throne, the young Mortimer, had always been a thorn in the side of Henry IV., as Harry Hotspur very well knew.

His generosity.

"He said he would not ransom Mortimer;
Forbade my tongue to speak of Mortimer;
But I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his ear I'll holla 'Mortimer';
Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but Mortimer, and give it him
To keep his anger still in motion."

3. Henry IV. had kept Mortimer in honourable but real captivity. He was now a grown young man, and one of the new king's first acts was to set him at liberty, and show him friendship. Perhaps his long imprisonment and good education had made a philosopher of him, for, though released from captivity, he never seems to have wished to be king, but

remained a faithful friend to Henry all his life. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the descendants of the Mortimers came to the throne at last.

4. Besides setting Mortimer free, Henry was generous to his old enemies the Percies, who had rebelled and had been so thoroughly defeated by himself and his father. Harry Hotspur's son was restored to his title and estates as Earl of Northumberland; nor did the Percies forget this generosity in after times.

5. Henry even took some steps towards releasing the King of Scotland, whom his father had imprisoned, but they came to nothing. The Scotch perhaps hardly wanted him back, as they were in a most disorderly and tumultuous condition, and the young king, if he were already in love with the beautiful English lady, might not be very anxious to return. However that might be, it appears that he and Henry were very good friends, and we find him afterwards helping him in his wars, and following him to his grave as chief mourner.

6. The young king also released many other prisoners and published a general pardon. Having thus done all he could in justice and generosity to the living, he proceeded to do what was possible to honour the dead. He appears to have retained some affection for Richard II., and felt great remorse for his wretched death. Richard had been buried privately in the country. His body was now brought to London and honourably buried in Westminster Abbey, in a very stately tomb which he had made for himself while he was still living. There we may see him now lying hand in hand with his good wife Anne of Bohemia, whom he had so tenderly loved.

7. In all this Henry showed himself wise and merciful; he was also extremely religious, though unhappily his religion took the wrong side; he entirely threw himself into the cause of the Roman Church, and against the followers of Wycliffe. We saw how Henry IV. disgraced his reign by the statute for burning heretics. His son carried out the same system, feeling probably just as Saul did as he rode to Damascus, and "verily believing that he was doing God service."

8. Persecution had not destroyed the Lollards; there were still a great many of them in the country. It was at this time that the Archbishop of Canterbury made some additions to his palace at Lambeth, and imprisoned so many of the poor followers of Wycliffe in a part of the new buildings that it has ever since been called the Lollard's Tower.

9. At the head of these persecuted men was a nobleman who

had formerly been a friend of the king's, Sir John Oldcastle, or, as he was afterwards called in right of his wife, Lord Cobham. Being a rich and powerful man, he was able to help and protect the teachers of the Lollards, and the archbishop accordingly made an attack upon him. It was now believed that the Lollards were not only heretics in religion (which no doubt they were, according to the Romish view), but also traitors and rebels against the government. It had already been charged against them that they had helped the peasants in the revolt under Wat Tyler, and they were now accused of being disaffected and ready to rebel if they could. Possibly this might be true about some of them, and was not much to be wondered at, as the poor had still many grievances and much injustice to endure; but it has never been proved that they did anything wrong.

The Lollards
and Lord
Cobham.

Lord Cobham was in the first instance charged with heresy—with denying the doctrine of transubstantiation, and saying that the Pope was Antichrist. He stood very gallantly to his principles, and was condemned to be burnt, but contrived to escape. Some time after this a report was raised that he had summoned the Lollards to meet him in great numbers near London, for the purpose of seizing on the king and his brothers, who were spending the Christmas together at one of the royal palaces at Eltham.

10. The king heard of the plot, and was quite ready to believe it. He was told that 25,000 rebels would assemble in the fields north of London, at St. Giles's. We should be pleased to see a blade of grass near "St. Giles's in the Fields" now; at that time it was a rural neighbourhood quite out of London. London was a compact city shut in with walls and gates. There were Bishops Gate, Alders Gate, Lud Gate, and many others of which only a name still remains. The king ordered all the gates to be closed, and then spread armed men round about those fields and rode there himself. But no crowd appeared, only about eighty men with no leader of any importance. Lord Cobham was not to be heard of, and no one knows to this day whether he and the others ever intended to come at all. Perhaps they were kept away by hearing of the king's armed men; perhaps no such conspiracy had ever existed.

11. Thirty-nine of the unfortunate eighty were either hanged or burnt; those who were considered traitors were hanged, and the heretics were burnt. Lord Cobham was not captured for four years; but at last he was found in Wales, brought to London, and, being looked on as both traitor and heretic, he was

burned as well as hanged. "His last words, drowned by the crackling flames, were praise of God. The people wept and prayed with him; they heard in contemptuous silence the declarations of the priests that Cobham died an enemy of God, and a heretic to the Church." But for the time the Lollards were put down, and forced to hide their opinions and avoid observation as much as they could.

12. The Church had a triumph in this respect; but there was another great danger threatening her. Her doctrines were to be believed and defended; but what about her wealth?

**The wealth
of the
Church.**

The Church was enormously rich. It had been so long looked on as a great mark of piety and means of salvation to give lands and money to the Church, to found or enrich abbeys and priories, that by this time a very large part of the country was in the hands of the clergy. For example, the Abbey of Westminster alone had vast possessions, not only in Westminster itself, but in other places far and near. It had its orchard where Orchard Street is now, its pastures and gardens at Long Acre and Covent (Couvent or Convent) Garden. It owned lands scattered abroad through ninety-seven towns and villages, seventeen hamlets, and 216 manors.

13. Even before Henry IV. died the House of Commons had begun to take great notice of this, and to make calculations as to the quantity of land possessed by the Church. They said that its property was so great that it would suffice to maintain fifteen earls, 1500 knights, and more than 6000 fighting men, and they advised the king to take possession of it. Henry IV. had not followed this advice, but now that he was dead it began to be talked of again. The great Church potentates were in alarm, and in the very beginning of Shakespeare's play of *Henry V.* we find the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely considering what they had better do to save their precious riches.

14. They had plenty of worldly wisdom. They knew their man very well. Henry, with his high, brave, religious enthusiasm, had no wish to rob the Church, but with his whole soul he longed for glorious adventures. Though there were sometimes truces, the Hundred Years' War was not over yet, and there lay France still unconquered. The clever churchmen saw that if they could turn his eyes and thoughts that way they would be safe. His father, too, who had had so much trouble with the turbulent nobles, had advised Henry, as the only way of keeping them

**The war
with France
renewed.**

from raising disturbances at home, to lead them to foreign wars. What did he wish for better !

This is what he says of himself, or Shakespeare says for him :—

“ By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost ;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear ;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires :
But if it be a sin to covet honour
I am the most offending soul alive.”

He was only too willing to listen to the advice that he should go to war again. The clergy promised him large sums of money to help his army, the English people rejoiced at the thought of gaining more victories and more spoils, and the condition of France was such as to give him every hope of success.

15. It is impossible to describe how miserable that country was at this time. The king, Charles, was insane ; the dauphin, his eldest son, was selfish and wicked ; and his other nearest relations, who ought to have tried to supply his place, were always quarrelling fiercely among themselves. The principal of these were the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke of Orleans, who hated each other most furiously. The Duke of Burgundy had caused the former Duke of Orleans (father of the present one) to be murdered in the streets of Paris. His party were called the Burgundians, and the party of the Duke of Orleans were called after his father-in-law, who was cleverer than he, the Armagnacs. The Burgundians were inclined to be friendly with England. The people of Paris were divided between the two parties ; the lower classes, and especially the butchers, sided with the Duke of Burgundy. Murders and uproars went on everywhere, and the miserable country was turned almost into a desert, as if an enemy's army had ravaged it.

State of
France.

This gave a grand opportunity to the English. Henry said, and most likely said it quite sincerely, that he was called by God to punish the wickedness and vices of the land, and to restore it to peace and order. When our own wishes lie very strongly in one direction, it is not very hard to persuade ourselves that God's will lies that way too.

16. Henry was for no half measures ; he revived Edward III.'s claim to be king of France. If that had been an unreasonable claim even in Edward, in Henry V. it was quite preposterous, because he himself was not, as we know, the lawful heir to

Edward. The English parliament had accepted Henry IV. as king of England, though he was not the direct successor, but the English parliament could never make him king of France. If Edward had any real right, that right must now have descended to Mortimer; though, as he does not seem to have wished to be king of England, still less was he likely to wish to be king of France.

17. Henry, however, now claimed the throne of France, and he wished to marry the French king's daughter. Some negotiations were set on foot, but they led to nothing, and the war began again. Just before Henry started trouble arose in England. Though it lasted but a short time, and was speedily put an end to, we must not quite pass it over, because in it we see how "coming events cast their shadows before;" the "coming events" being the Wars of the Roses, the great struggle between the two families of York and Lancaster, which was soon to begin. The Duke of York being a younger son of Edward III. than John of Gaunt, had still less claim to the throne than the Lancasters, but his descendants had now made themselves stronger by the heir of the family, Richard, Earl of Cambridge, marrying a lady of the House of Mortimer, sister to the Mortimer who has been mentioned so often. This Earl of Cambridge now conspired against King Henry, with some other nobles, intending to make his brother-in-law king. The plot was discovered, and the conspirators put to death; but Richard of York and Anne Mortimer had a son who did not forget his great descent, and whom we shall meet again in due time.

18. For the present, however, all went well. Henry, with a fine army, sailed to France, and laid siege to the town of Harfleur, at the mouth of the Seine. The first thing that he did on landing in France was to give the most strict and solemn orders that the peaceable inhabitants of the country should be well treated.

They were neither to be robbed, murdered, nor injured in any way, and this order he constantly adhered to. Even when his army was in most need and privation he never permitted anything to be taken from the country people which was not paid for, thus treating them far better than their own cruel and selfish princes did.

19. After five weeks Harfleur was taken, but during that time the English army had suffered so much from disease that it had dwindled down to a very small number. Henry, however, did

not choose to return to England after taking only one town; he determined to march through Normandy and Picardy to Calais. He had to pass the river Somme, but on the other side of this river was the great French army, which tried to hinder his crossing. At last, however, the English got over, and the two armies confronted each other. The French army was quite six times as large as the English, and it included crowds of those proud, foolish, wicked princes and nobles who made their country so miserable. The English found the country through which they marched was almost a desert, and before they met the enemy they were half starved and in a most wretched plight.

20. The great battle of Agincourt has been grandly described by Shakespeare. He gives us the picture of the night before the fight: the French were full of boasting and vain-glorious confidence; they were so sure of the victory, and of taking Henry prisoner, that they had sent to him beforehand about fixing his ransom. And the princes and lords were longing for morning, that they might fall on the sick and starving English. "Alas! poor Harry of England," says one of them, "he longs not for the dawning as we do."

1415.
Battle of
Agincourt.

"The poor condemned English,
Like sacrifices, by their watchful fires
Sit patiently, and inly ruminate
The morning's danger; and their gesture sad,
Investing lank-lean cheeks and war-worn coats,
Presenteth them unto the gazing moon
So many horrid ghosts."

The English army had not nearly so many lords and princes as the French; but it had a great many of those stout English archers of whom we have heard so often. The French nobles despised them, and would hardly admit any of the lower ranks into their own hosts; they said France should be defended by gentlemen only.

21. The great French army was crowded up between two thick woods, and among newly-ploughed fields; it was autumn-time, and the ground was soaking and muddy. We can imagine how the heavy-armed men and heavy-armed horses would struggle and flounder about. The English archers, on their own active feet, and lightly clad, were as nimble as deer. Each of them, beside his good bow, had an axe or a mace, and, moreover, a sharp stake tipped with iron, which he was to plant in the ground before him. It was like Crecy over again. As the proud French

knights who scorned the English archers came riding up, the arrows flew among them like hail; they could not get to close quarters with the archers because of the palisade of sharp stakes. The poor horses sank knee-deep in the soft ground. At last the archers, flinging aside their bows, sprang out from behind the palisade, and began to ply their battle-axes, and with such force that an old chronicler says "it seemed as though they were hammering on anvils."

22. It need hardly be said that King Henry fought like a lion. When he had ridden among his men to cheer them up before the battle he had worn above his helmet a golden crown glittering with jewels. One of the French princes with a great blow shattered the crown, but the good helmet sheltered his head—the very helmet which we may still see above his tomb in Westminster Abbey, dented with the sword-marks of that French prince. The French nobles fought bravely too, but their bravery was of no avail; there was no discipline, no rule; they were all too proud to obey orders, and they were slain in crowds.

23. Towards the end of the fight, when the English were making a great many prisoners, a terrible mistake occurred. A loud noise was heard in the rear of the French, and those who were retreating seemed to be rallying again. Henry supposed that great reinforcements had arrived, and gave orders that all the prisoners should be put to death; "for which act," says Baker, "though done in cold blood, yet the king could not justly be taxed with cruelty, seeing the number of prisoners was more than his own soldiers, and nothing could give assurance of safety but their slaughter." It was soon found, however, that the noise was only caused by some peasants coming to plunder, and Henry at once put an end to the massacre.

24. Thus this great battle was won; it was a splendid victory, and raised the fame and spirit of the English higher than ever, though no special result followed from it. Henry, with his grave, religious spirit, gave all the glory to God, and forbade any one of his army to boast of their brave deeds, "or take that praise from God which is His only."

25. The slaughter of the French nobility and gentry in this fight was terrible. Besides many royal princes and great noblemen, nearly 8000 men of gentle blood were killed. Many others, among them the Duke of Orleans, were made prisoners. Henry was kind and courteous to the duke; he went himself to console him and bid him be of good cheer, saying, "If God has

given me grace to win this victory, I acknowledge that it is through no merit of my own ;" but he added, "I believe that God has willed that the French should be punished, and if what I have heard be true, no wonder at it; for they tell me that never were seen such a disorder, such a license of wickedness, such debauchery, such bad vices as now reign in France. It is pitiful and horrible to hear it all; and, certes, the wrath of the Lord must have been awakened."

26. After gaining this grand victory Henry was obliged to return to England, for he was in want both of men and money. The English people welcomed him with proud exultation; when his ship arrived at Dover they rushed into the sea to meet their hero, and carried him to the shore on their shoulders. At every town on the road they poured out in thousands to see him and do him honour. He did not pass Canterbury without visiting Becket's shrine, and making offerings there. When he arrived at Blackheath half London came forth to meet him, headed by the lords and commons, the clergy, the mayor, and the aldermen. Never was there such triumph and joy. But he still gave all the glory to God,

"Being free from vainness and self-glorious pride."

And a grand service was held in Westminster Abbey to render thanks for the victory.

27. The beautiful abbey which Henry III. had begun was not finished yet. Indeed, for the last hundred years it had scarcely been touched; but Henry V. loved it, and in the midst of all his wars and campaigns he found time to care for it. He gave orders that the works should go on, and in his days the stately nave, as we now see it, was nearly finished. The architect was no other than Richard Whittington, "Lord Mayor of London town."

West-
minster
Abbey.

28. Though Henry had gained the battle of Agincourt, he was still as far as ever from being king of France. It was not long before he invaded the country again, and resolutely began the conquest of Normandy. He tried to make the Normans remember how nearly he and they were related, and that he and his nobles were descended from Norman forefathers; he talked to them about the old fierce Northmen, who were the ancestors of both. But it was not of much use. The Northmen in England were Englishmen now, and the Northmen in France, Frenchmen. They were

1417.
Conquest of
Normandy.

enemies, not friends. Every part of Normandy that he conquered Henry treated very well; indeed, they had not been so peaceable and so safe for a long time, but still they could not bear to be governed by a foreigner.

29. After taking a great many places in Normandy, Henry at last besieged its capital, Rouen, a very large and beautiful city, which made a valorous defence. The French held out obstinately, till they were almost starving, and Henry would most likely never have succeeded, had it not been for the terrible dissensions and civil wars of the

1418.
Siege of
Rouen.

French nation itself. The armies that ought to have come to the relief of Rouen were employed in fighting one another, and at last Henry gained possession of the city, but not till the garrison had eaten their horses and dogs, and many thousands had died of hunger and disease.

30. When the French found that Rouen was lost, and the whole of Normandy in the power of the English, it seemed as if the quarrels and discords among themselves must cease, and they would all join heart and soul against the invaders. There was some attempt at making peace with the English, and Henry again demanded the hand of the French princess, but it came to nothing as yet. The Duke of Burgundy, who had hitherto somewhat favoured England, now appeared to forsake the English cause, and made a kind of peace with the dauphin, but it was only a hollow peace. The wicked and treacherous dauphin contrived to get the Duke of Burgundy into his power. They had agreed to meet in the middle of a bridge at Montereau, between strong barricades, and each of them attended by only ten men. The dauphin and his followers had sworn the most solemn oaths that they meant everything fair and honourable, and that no evil should befall the duke. Nevertheless, no sooner was he within the empty space, and shut off from the rest of his people, than one of the dauphin's men struck him a deadly blow with an axe; the rest then set on him and murdered him, killing some and imprisoning others of his ten men.

31. This horrible murder put an end to the hopes of France. The murdered duke's son, who succeeded to all his father's great titles, power, and possessions, cast off all thought of peace with the dauphin, took part with Henry and the English at once, and there was no one left to resist. The poor insane king, who had intervals of reason sometimes, and the queen were much under the influence of the Duke of Burgundy; besides which, the queen hated her son, the dauphin, and loved her daughter Katherine,

the princess whom Henry wished to marry. Now, therefore, a peace was really made, which is called the Treaty of Troyes. The fair young princess was given to Henry at last, and they were married in one of the beautiful churches of that city. Henry was declared Regent of France as long as the king lived, and when he died then Henry was to be what he had claimed all along, King of France in his stead.

1430.
Treaty of
Troyes.

32. Now he once more returned to England, with the beautiful wife whom he had won by his side. Once more he was received with enthusiastic joy and triumph. The new queen was crowned in Westminster Abbey, and by and bye a son was born to him, who was to inherit all his glories. One can hardly fancy a prouder position. The splendid young warrior, so noble, so famous, beloved and honoured King of England, soon to be King of France also, and, as he hoped, to restore order, religion, and peace to that fair but unhappy country; with a wife whom he loved, and a son to bear his name. He was but thirty-three years old; and now, all unexpectedly, the end came.

33. He had returned to France, where there was still fighting and resistance, for it could not be supposed that the dauphin was going to sit down quietly under the loss of his kingdom. It was a very hot summer. Henry was leading his army to support his allies in Burgundy, when he was seized with sudden illness, and knew he was to die. He died as bravely as he had lived, and as piously. He gave the best advice to his brothers and counsellors, comforted them with kind and calm words, and charged them to be faithful to his wife and child. Sobbing and weeping, they promised all he asked. Then he desired the seven penitential Psalms to be read to him. When the reader came to the words in the fifty-first Psalm, "Build thou the walls of Jerusalem," Henry stopped him and said that he had always intended to go on a Crusade and restore the Holy City, when once he had established peace and good order in France (as his father had also intended). Soon after he exclaimed, "My part is with my Lord Jesus Christ." "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed it;" and so died.

1422.
Death of
Henry.

34. After his death three great cities vied with each other for the glory of his burial—Paris, Rouen, and Westminster. But everybody knew how he had loved Westminster Abbey, and it was decided that he should be buried there. It was the grandest funeral that had ever been known. King James of Scotland,

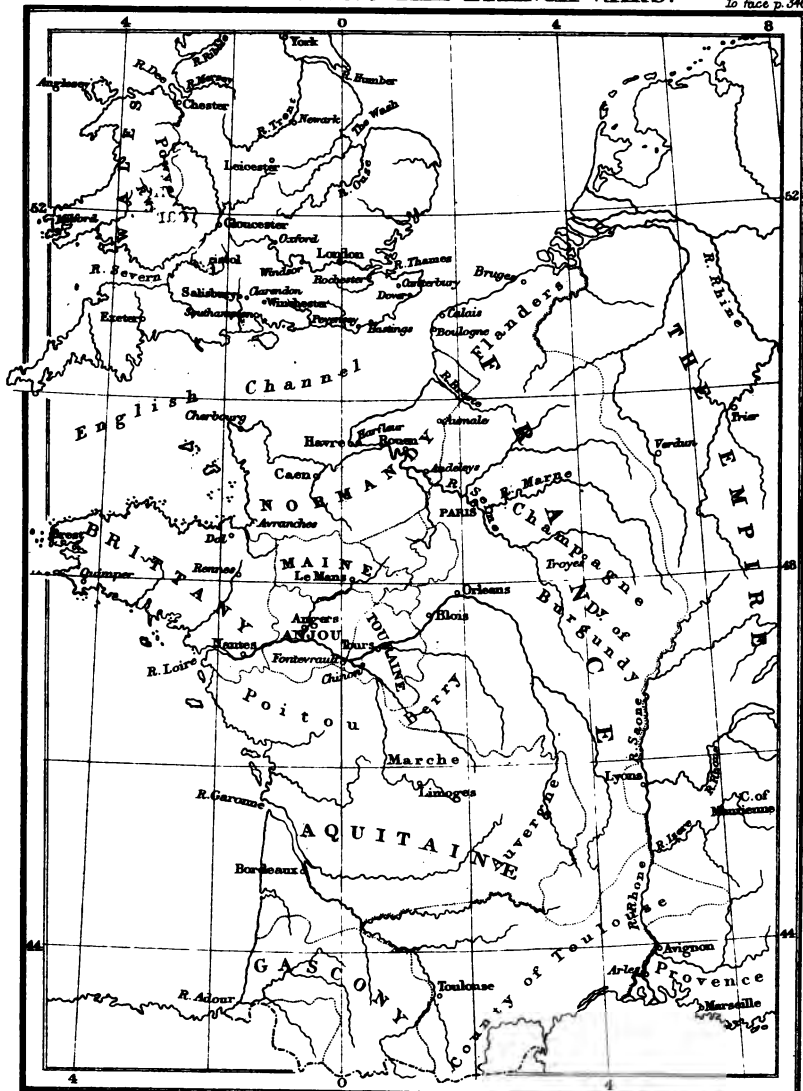
who had been with him in France, followed him to his grave as chief mourner. He had chosen the place for his tomb himself, just behind the shrine of Edward the Confessor. It is more than a tomb, it is a separate little chapel, ornamented with sculpture and statues, and built in the shape of his initial letter H. His image was made of English oak, and covered with silver; the head was of solid silver. All the silver is gone now; but the oaken figure is still to be seen; above it on a shelf are his dented helmet, his shield, and his saddle.

35. Thus this short glorious reign ended, like a dream, or like a tale that is told. The next reign, that of Henry's son, was long, inglorious, and melancholy. All Henry's great victories, all his great schemes, went for nothing; we shall have to see all his work undone. And though we can hardly help feeling some English pride as we read of his and his people's splendid deeds, we ought not to be sorry that it ended as it did. Henry had no right to the French crown, and England had no right to govern France. In these days it would be thought very wicked for one nation to make war on another for any such reason. Though Henry must not be judged as we should judge a king who acted as he did in our own days, neither must it be regretted that all his great conquests were lost, and his great hopes fell to the ground. Not only for the sake of France, but for the sake of England too, it was best.

36. It has been remarked before, as the English kings gradually lost bit by bit of their possessions in France, that it was much for the interest of England that they did so. Had it ever come to pass that France and England should be really governed by one king, even though that king had been an Englishman, there is no doubt that England, which is much the smaller of the two, and cut off by the sea from the rest of Europe, would have become a mere province of France. The king must have principally lived in France, as Henry II. and Richard I. did, instead of living in and caring most for England; and England would never have developed her own special character, or taken her own great place in the world. So though we shall soon have to hear of many disasters and losses to the English, we may take heart and look on them as "blessings in disguise."

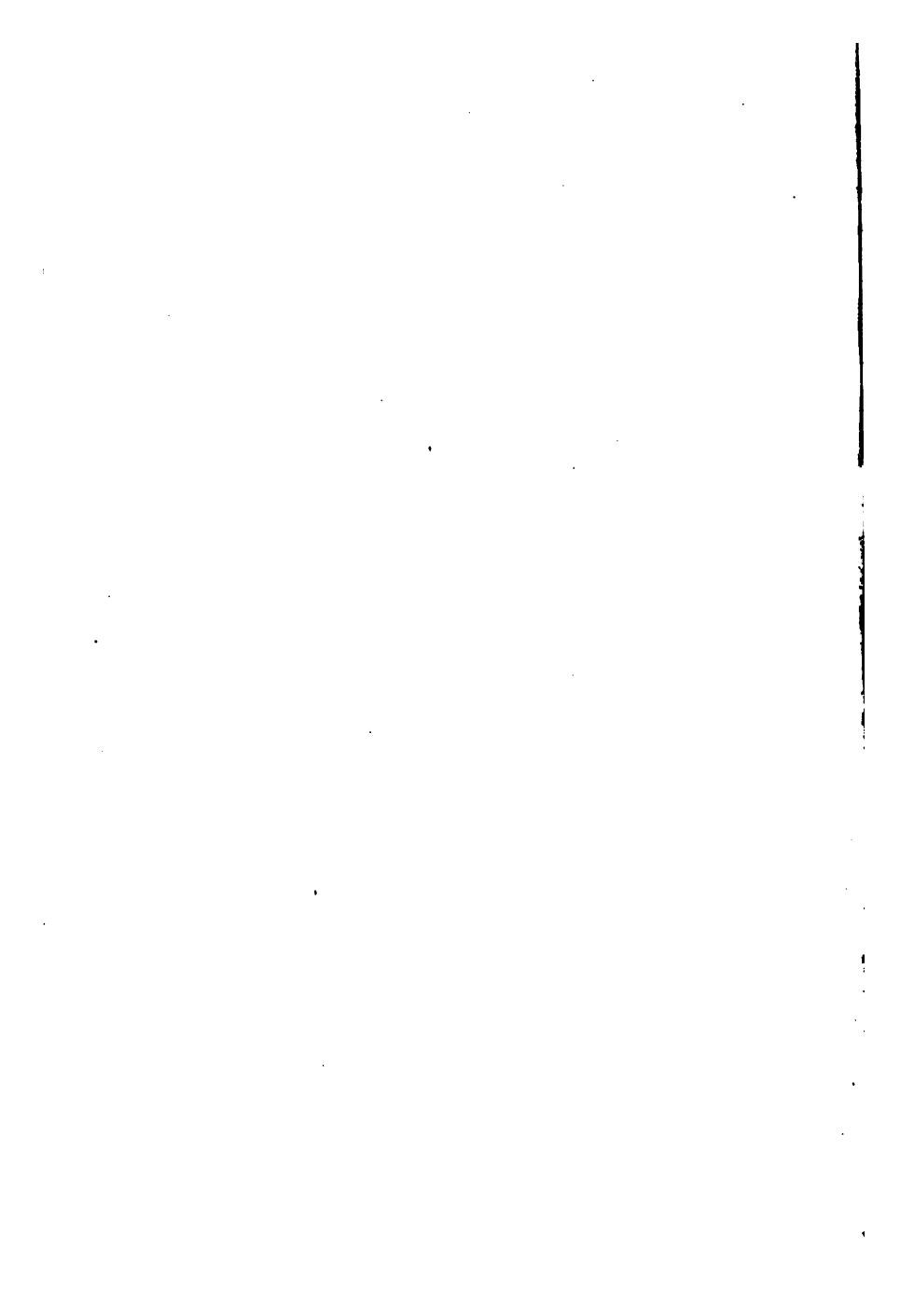
FRANCE DURING THE FRENCH WARS.

To face p. 346.



London: Macmillan & Co.

Stanford's Geographical Establishment.



LECTURE XXXV.—FRANCE RECOVERS.

Henry VI. The Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester. Cardinal Beaufort. The Maid of Orleans. Coronation of Charles VII. of France. Death of the Maid.

1. THE young prince, son of Henry V. and Katherine of France, was only nine months old when his father died. The government would therefore naturally fall into the hands of his uncles, the last king's brothers. There were ^{1422.} two of these, the Duke of Bedford and the Duke of Gloucester. The Duke of Bedford was the same as the young Prince John who fought in the Battle of Shrewsbury, in the days of Henry IV., and of whom we read in ^{His uncles.} Shakespeare's play. He seems to have been his father's favourite, and was now grown to be a very wise and clever man. His brother, Henry V., placed great confidence in him, and when he was dying appointed him to be Regent of France, giving him much good advice as to how he was to proceed. The other brother, Humphrey, was a turbulent, ambitious, and selfish prince, who did a great deal of mischief as long as he lived. Though his brother Henry appointed him to be Regent of England, he had warned him with his dying breath never to set his own selfish interests above those of his country; and the English parliament, perhaps knowing already the sort of man Gloucester was, thought it better that England should be governed by a council. Still he was called Protector, and when his brother, the Duke of Bedford, was away in France, he naturally had a great deal of power and influence. He was liked by the people, and was called, one hardly knows why, the "Good Duke Humphrey." He certainly had one good point about him, which was that he liked books and literature; he collected a very beautiful library, and he used to invite foreign scholars to England, and employ them to translate books for him.

2. Though at this time there were no very clever English writers, like Chaucer or William Langlande, people were growing

more and more fond of reading. All books were still in "manuscript," written out by the hand, and about this period it is said that there is a great change in the appearance of these manuscripts. The old ones were very beautifully written; the scribe, or writer, took his time; the pages were often exquisitely ornamented, and every letter perfectly formed. There were not very many books then, nor, indeed, could there be, when they were produced at this rate. But now that so many people wanted to read books, the scribes had to hurry more, and to get a great many more written. They began to write a sort of running hand; not half so beautiful to look at, and not always very easy to read; but by this means books grew more plentiful. This is again rather like "coming events casting their shadows before." Duke Humphrey afterwards presented his fine library to the University of Oxford.

3. Besides the two dukes, Henry V.'s brothers, there was another very powerful man, his uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, who was Bishop of Winchester. He was enormously rich and ambitious. He and the Duke of Gloucester were continually quarrelling and striving for the mastery, and kept England in a constant state of disquiet. The French historians give him a very bad character; one of them calls him plainly "a Satan," though no longer "the old Satan, shameful and outcast, but a Satan who is acknowledged, decent, respectable, and rich; sitting on a bishop's throne."

4. Almost directly after the death of Henry V. the unfortunate King of France died also. The Treaty of Troyes had appointed that when this happened Henry V. was to succeed him as King of France. But as Henry was already dead, the right, such as it was, descended to his little son, who was accordingly called King of France. How things might have turned out had Henry V. lived we cannot tell, but probably, even then, the dauphin would have made some resistance. As it was, he at once came forward with his partisans, and declared himself King of France, under the name of Charles VII. And though the Treaty of Troyes had been called "the perpetual peace," the war broke out again.

5. The Scotch were, as usual, allies of the French. Although their king had been a prisoner, and in Henry V.'s power, they had fought on the French side even during his reign, and some of the Scotch nobles had received great titles and honours in France. The Scotch, indeed, were so brave and so accustomed

to fighting the English, that it began to be said "they were the only antidotes to the English," and the French were glad to have as many Scotch soldiers as possible in their armies. To put a stop to this, the Duke of Bedford at last decided to set the King of Scotland free, on his paying a ransom and promising to keep peace towards England. So after nineteen years' absence from his country King James Stuart and his beloved English wife went to Scotland, where he did his best to keep his promise, though he could not always hinder his unruly subjects from fighting the English.

6. The Duke of Bedford had no easy task. The most important piece of advice his brother Henry had given him, respecting the affairs of France, was to keep up the friendship with the Duke of Burgundy. He had always endeavoured to do this, and had, indeed, married the sister of the duke; but his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, gave great offence to the Duke of Burgundy by marrying a very rich lady, who was already married to a cousin of his own, and whose heir he hoped to be himself. After this it cost the Duke of Bedford a great deal of trouble to maintain the alliance with Burgundy.

7. On the whole, however, the English still kept the upper hand in France. There was another great battle and victory at Verneuil, which was thought almost as good as Agincourt. The dauphin had very little power in any part of France, except south of the river Loire. The English now longed to press beyond this river; but before they could venture to do that they must get possession of Orleans, a strong and important city which was built upon it. And now commenced one of the most famous sieges in history, and one of the most romantic stories.

1429.
The siege of
Orleans.

8. The English were not numerous enough to surround this great city entirely; but they built a number of strong forts called "Bastilles" around it, which could overlook and protect the blank places intervening. Some of the most famous warriors of England gathered round the city; the head of all was Lord Salisbury; the bravest perhaps was Talbot. As the siege went on Salisbury was killed; but little by little the English were gaining ground. They were finishing their fortifications, and it seemed that very soon they would enclose the whole city, so that no aid and no food could be brought in. Then it would most likely be Rouen over again; and if Orleans fell the English would become masters of the south of France, as they already were of the north.

9. A French army under the Count de Clermont was sent to help the city, and to cut off the supplies of the English, so as to turn the tables against them, and starve them out if possible. The Duke of Bedford, on his part, was sending relief to the English camp; both artillery and food. The food was principally fish, as it was now Lent, and no one dared eat any meat. Of course there were troops to protect the waggons of provisions. Clermont's army, which was coming to help Orleans, fell upon this company of English, and a fight took place, in which the French and their Scotch allies were defeated and driven off. This little fight was called the Battle of the Herrings; they say there were more herrings strewed about the field than there were dead soldiers.

10. Though it did not sound very serious, the defeat caused much discouragement in the city. Almost all the leaders went away in despair; the Count de Clermont and his army made no more attempts to rescue Orleans; they retreated. All the great men who were in the city left it now, while they could still escape; the Admiral of France, the chancellor, even the archbishop and the bishop, "thinking it a pity that such eminent men should be taken by the English," says the French historian. Everything seemed to show that the city would soon fall, and with it all the hopes of France. Where could they look for help?

11. We have seen the terrible condition in which France was. Henry V. believed that he was commissioned by God to punish its vices, and restore religion, order, and justice. But though he had won such great victories, he had not made the people better or happier. Wherever one looked there was nothing but cruelty and violence, robbery and starvation. All the princes who ought to have protected, helped, and guided the people, led the armies, and driven away the foreign invaders, were selfish, half-hearted, or treacherous. Some had taken the part of the English, and fought against their own king; others when they saw danger fled away, leaving the helpless and poor to suffer as they could. All were envious of each other; and even those who were brave would not act together, or submit to any order or authority but their own proud will. The only hope for them would have seemed to be that some brave, great leader, a valiant king of men like Henry V., whom all must have honoured and obeyed, could have stood forth, won their trust, and brought order and discipline, confidence and enthusiasm, into those disorderly and disheartened troops.

12. And where was such a leader to be found? It was not the king, not one of the royal princes, not one of the wealthy nobles of France, whose hearts were so full of pride and selfishness; but a poor girl, a poor peasant child, who could neither read nor write, who knew nothing but how to spin and sew, who had nothing but her own pure heart, it was she who at last rose up and saved her country, which none else could save. There is no story in all the long history of the world more strange and beautiful than the story of the Maid of Orleans.

Their new leader.

13. She was born in a wild and woody country on the borders of Lorraine and Champagne. Her father, Jacques Darc, was a poor labourer. His little daughter Joan or Jeanne was bred up like any other poor man's child; but before we can understand either the maiden or her story, we must try to realize a little, if we can, the world she lived in, and how different it was from our world. When she was taken to the little country church on Sundays and holidays she would, doubtless, see on the walls the images of crowned saints and angels, of Christ and the Virgin Mary. They might be very roughly painted, but to the poor village people they would seem beautiful and glorious; nor would they be looked on as mere pictures. Jeanne and all the others in the church thought they were actually like the real saints and angels in heaven, and would kneel and pray before them without a moment's doubt that they would hear and answer. If the world seemed cold and bleak, the poor cottages rude and bare, and men were rough and miserable, they would like to think of the happy, golden world, where their friends the saints sate in glory, with a kind thought of pity for them and their troubles. Jeanne loved going to church above all other things.

Jeanne Darc.

14. But when she walked in the great oak forests near her home she would have a visionary world about her there too. Where we should only see trees and streams, and grass and flowers, and might half fancy from their beauty and brightness that they must be alive and happy in a way of their own, everybody then thought that there were fairies and wood-spirits. In England, indeed, it was believed that the elves and fairies had been driven away by priests and friars, and that that was the reason they could no longer be seen, as they used to be, dancing in the green meadows. In the forests where Jeanne lived the priest used to drive the fairies away too; he came to say a mass every year beside their favourite fountain, and under a great tree,

on which the children would hang garlands to please the "ladies," as they called them. The priests, like everybody else, believed in the fairies, but as the tales of them had come down from the old heathen times they considered them unchristian, and that they ought to be banished.

15. Thus these people did really and truly seem to live in two worlds, the visible and the invisible; and though the commonplace, the busy, and the dull would half forget the invisible world, the gentle, and quiet, and thoughtful ones would live in it more than in the visible. Jeanne, besides being a good and pious girl, was full of poetry and imagination; when she was not sewing and spinning by her mother's side she loved dearly to go and pray in the quiet church where the saints were, or to wander in the woods, feeding the wild birds and listening to the church bells.

16. As she was growing up, this peaceful, visionary life was disturbed by the same miseries which disturbed the rest of the country. Sometimes poor fugitives who had been driven out of their homes by the war came through the village; sometimes her own people had to flee, and when they came back would find everything destroyed or burnt. Thus she began to think about the war and her unhappy country, and her whole heart was filled with pity and sorrow. She did what she could to help the sufferers; when the poor refugees came by she gave them up her own bed, and went to sleep in the barn. She prayed and fasted; and as she brooded over these sad things, and longed to do more, she seemed to be lifted out of herself and the little world about

her. The saints seemed to come nearer to her; she **Her visions.** began to see bright lights and to hear strange voices which no one else could see or hear. From out of the bright light a noble figure with shining wings spoke, and told her it was she who was to help the King of France, and to give him back his kingdom. The poor child was frightened; she was now seventeen or eighteen years old; she said she knew nothing about riding on horseback, or leading soldiers. But as time went on she saw more and more visions, heard more and more voices, all bidding her rise and rescue her country.

17. No one believed her at first; her father and mother were angry, and forbade her leaving home; they even tried to marry her to an honest man of the village. But the impulse was too strong; she felt that she must go. At last she persuaded an old village wheelwright, her uncle, to take her to the nearest town, where she would find soldiers and a captain, who would send her

to the dauphin. The captain was greatly puzzled when he saw this village girl arrive, and heard her say that the Lord had sent her to the aid of the dauphin. He was quite ready to think there was something supernatural in the matter, but he was by no means sure that it might not be a work of the devil instead of the saints; for besides believing in the agency of the invisible saints and angels, every one believed also quite as firmly in the power of evil spirits, wizards, and witches; and to the end of her life half the world believed that poor Jeanne Darc was a sorceress inspired by the devil. The parish priest was sent for to sprinkle holy water, and to drive away the evil spirit if there was one.

18. But Jeanne was so gentle, so modest, and so firm in declaring that she was sent by God that people began to believe in her. The captain decided he would send her to the king, or the dauphin, as she called him, for he had not yet been crowned. She was dressed in armour, and five or six armed men were appointed to attend her, though they did not know what to think about it, and were half afraid she might be a witch after all. But she stopped to pray at every church she passed, and at last she arrived safely at the French court. When she saw the king, whom she recognized at once among the crowd of courtiers, she knelt down before him, saying, "Gentle dauphin, I am called Jeanne the Maid. The King of heaven sends to tell you by me that you shall be consecrated and crowned in the city of Reims." It was in Reims Cathedral that all the kings of France were crowned, and the French people thought as much of that sacred city as the English did of Westminster Abbey.

19. Whether Charles believed in her Divine inspiration or not, it seemed as if there were no other way of saving Orleans, and that, this last desperate chance had better be tried. But before that it should be inquired into once more whether she might not be influenced by the devil, instead of by God. Four or five bishops examined her this time, but they could find nothing against her. When they desired that she would show a sign to prove that God had sent her, she said, "My sign will be to raise the siege of Orleans." Every one in the whole region declared that she was a saint; the defenders of Orleans had heard that a miraculous virgin was coming to help them, and sent earnestly entreating for her aid.

20. At last she was allowed to go. She rode forth, no longer like a poor peasant girl, but fully clad in beautiful white armour, mounted on a splendid black horse, and bearing a sacred sword,

called the sword of St. Katherine, which it was said she had miraculously discovered in the church. Before her was carried a white standard, on which was the picture of God holding the world in his hands, and two angels, each with a lily-flower.

It is easy to imagine what an effect this wonderful sight would produce both on friend and foe. The discouraged French roused up suddenly to hope and confidence. Here was this beautiful girl, this beautiful saint sent expressly by God, to lead them to victory; and if God were for them, who could be against them? As she marched to Orleans, followed by her troop of soldiers, she had an altar set up in the open air, and they all received the sacrament. These wild, fierce men, who would obey no one else, would have followed the Maid to the end of the world.

21. The English, on the other hand, lost heart. They, too, believed Jeanne was miraculously inspired. If it were God fighting against them what could they do? But in their hearts many of them thought she was a witch and led by the devil. This seemed more terrible still. They were ready enough to fight against men—against the Frenchmen whom they had beaten so often; but how could they resist the spells of a sorceress?

22. It was no wonder that it all ended as it did. When Jeanne led the French soldiers against the besiegers, the English, brave as they were, were terrified; they began to see visions too. Sometimes they saw white butterflies fluttering around her sacred banner; sometimes they saw the saints or Michael the Archangel among her troops. The siege of Orleans had lasted seven months; in ten days all the English forts were in the hands of the French, and the city was free. It was on a Sunday morning that the English retreated. The Maiden caused an altar to be raised in the plain, and before the enemy was well out of sight the rescued people were kneeling around it, giving God thanks.

23. Thus Jeanne had given the "sign" she had promised, and Orleans was delivered. Now she turned to the great work she had at heart—the coronation of the dauphin. It was a long journey to Reims, and a great part of the country through which they must pass was in the hands of the English or the Burgundians. But the French knew no fears now; they crowded around the Maid; always more and more of them followed her standard as she led the king to Reims. Wherever they went they were successful. They took one town after another—even

1429. The
Maid saves
Orleans.

Troyes, where Henry V. had been married; they defeated the English in the battle of Patay; at last they reached Reims, and in its venerable cathedral Charles was anointed, crowned, and consecrated King of France.

Coronation
of the
dauphin.

On that glorious day the Maiden felt that her work was done. She knelt, weeping, before the king, saying, "Oh, gentle king, the pleasure of the Lord is accomplished." And now she longed to go again to her humble cottage home, to her brothers and her sister, who would be so rejoiced to see her return. But this was not to be the end.

24. It was quite true that her work was done. In the eyes of all the people the consecration and holy anointing made Charles king in a way he had never been before. His rival, the young son of Henry V., the poor child who was still called King of France, had no chance now. He had not even been crowned, except as King of England, at Westminster. When he was brought to Paris afterwards to be crowned King of France the ceremony seemed a mere empty form. The true king had already been consecrated at Reims.

25. It would have been happy for poor Jeanne had she been permitted to go back to her quiet village home. Up till this time she had clearly known what she had to do, and the "voices" which she thought she heard had been clear and distinct. But now she had no such certainty as to what she ought to do next, and the "voices" grew confused and contradictory. Sometimes now, instead of success, there was failure in what she attempted, and the soldiers began to lose faith in her. At last, while endeavouring to defend a city which was besieged by the Burgundian party, she was taken prisoner.

26. The rest of her history is a sad one, and utterly disgraceful to all who were concerned in it, except to the Maid herself. She was sold and bandied about from one to another, till the Duke of Burgundy gave her into the hands of the English at Rouen. Whether the Duke of Bedford and the rest thought her a sorceress or not, they at least knew that she had been their most successful enemy, and that they owed the ruin of their cause to her. She was charged with heresy and sorcery, and brought up before a council of the inquisition. A French bishop was at the head of the tribunal, and other French churchmen took part in her trial and condemnation, but they were entirely under the influence of Cardinal Beaufort and the English.

The Maid
taken
prisoner.

27. The cruel and cowardly dauphin whom she had made king never stirred a finger to help her. At last, after a long trial, in which every effort was made to cause her to confess that she had been instigated by the devil, and not by the saints, in which she was persecuted, tormented, and terrified in every manner, she was declared guilty of heresy, handed over to the civil power, and burned alive in the market-place of Rouen. With her dying breath she spoke in defence of the honour of her king; she bore testimony once more to the

1431. "voices" that God had sent her; and calling on the
Her death. name of Jesus, and pressing a rough cross to her breast, she died—noble, pure, and saintlike as she had lived.

28. In the play of *Henry VI.*, Part I., we find a very coarse and false description of the Maid of Orleans, or La Pucelle, as she is called, which no doubt shows the common idea which the English had of her. It is some satisfaction to know that Shakespeare did not write that play, though it generally goes under his name.

LECTURE XXXVI.—LOSS OF FRANCE AND TROUBLES
IN ENGLAND.

End of the Hundred Years' War. Margaret of Anjou. Death of Gloucester and Suffolk. Cade's revolt. The principal actors in the Wars of the Roses.

1. THE English were none the better for the murder (we can call it by no other name) of the Maid of Orleans. After her death their affairs in France went on as badly as possible; there were no more famous battles or sieges; both countries were nearly exhausted; but the French gradually gained ground, and the English lost. The Duke of Bedford seemed almost the only man who could do any good either in England or France, and everything always went wrong in whichever country he was absent from; but at last he died, and all the prospects of the English in France died with him. The Duke of Burgundy, who was their most important and powerful ally, but who had begun to cool in his friendship of late, now at once did what was his plain duty, broke with the English and sided with his own country. **Progress of the French.**

2. Before, however, he would make peace with Charles, who was the same as the dauphin who had murdered the duke's father on the bridge of Montereau, he forced him to humble himself in the dust for that wicked act, and make what amends he now could. He was obliged to say that at that time he was very young, and was guided by evil counsellors. He was to found a chapel and a convent, and to set up a stone cross in the middle of the bridge. The Dean of Paris, as representing the king, was forced to kneel down before the duke, praying his mercy for the murder. The duke was then appeased, and the peace was made.

3. After that there was no more hope for the English, though they would not give in for a long time yet. There were two great parties who opposed each other about this matter. One side wished to make peace, and to save what they still could; the head of this party was Cardinal Beaufort, the Bishop of Winchester. The other party were for fighting on, and still trying to get all that they **Parties in England.**

had ever hoped for in the victorious days of Henry V. The head of the war party was the proud, ambitious Duke of Gloucester.

4. The young king, meanwhile, had grown into a man, but a very different man from his father or any of his family. He was very religious ; indeed, after his death he was looked on as almost a saint ; but he was weak-minded, and at times quite imbecile (this was attributed to his descent from the poor mad King of France). Every writer gives just the same impression of him ; perhaps the best description is this, given by Baker. "He was tall of stature, spare and slender of body, of a comely countenance, and all parts well proportioned. For endowments of mind, he had virtues enough to make him a saint, but not to make him a god, as kings are said to be gods. . . He was not sensible of what the world calls honour, accounting the greatest honour to consist in humility. His greatest imperfection was that he had in him too much of the log and too little of the stork ; for he would not move but as he was moved, and had rather be devoured than he would devour. He was not so stupid not to know prosperity from adversity, but he was so devout to think nothing adversity which was not a hindrance to devotion. He was fitter for a priest than a king ; for a sacrifice than a priest. He had one immunity peculiar to himself, that no man could ever be revenged on him, seeing he never offered any man an injury. By being innocent as a dove he kept his crown upon his head so long, but if he had been wise as a serpent he might have kept it on longer."

5. Thus Henry was sure to be always under the sway of some one of a stronger character than his own. For a long time everything was in the hands of the Duke of Gloucester or Cardinal Beaufort. As the cardinal grew older another man rose to power on his side, the Earl of Suffolk. He had an idea that if the King of England were married to a French princess it would go a great way towards making peace ; and he contrived to find a wife for him so exactly the reverse of himself in character, that in their after lives she was like the husband, and he the wife.

6. She was the daughter of a French prince belonging to the family of Anjou, who had many high-sounding titles, being called the King of Sicily, Naples, and Jerusalem. But these were all empty names, and he was in reality the poorest and most unlucky of princes. He was in prison when his daughter Margaret was born. She was now fifteen years old, and though her father was not in prison at this time, he was still

1445.
The king
marries
Margaret
of Anjou.

very poor. The English had lost nearly all they had ever won in France, but part of Anjou and Maine still belonged to them. It was now settled that Henry should marry the Princess Margaret, and give over those provinces to her father in return. We can imagine this marriage treaty would not be very popular in England, and especially with the war party. Instead of a grand alliance, and a bride who brought a fine dowry with her, such as the kings of England were accustomed to, here was a penniless bride, to whose father the English were to give up some of the most important parts of France which still remained to them. The Duke of Gloucester was furious, and the two parties came to hate each other more than ever.

7. The new queen, whose character soon began to show itself, of course took part with Suffolk, who had made such a fine match for her, and she looked on the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester as her enemies and rivals. This duchess was not the same whose marriage had so nearly caused a broil with the Duke of Burgundy some years before. The "good Duke Humphrey" seemed to have forgotten all about her, and had afterwards married an English lady, Eleanor Cobham. Till Henry VI. married and had a son the next heir to the throne was the Duke of Gloucester, and his wife was the first lady in the land. Whether she affronted the young Queen Margaret, and taunted her with her poverty (as she is made to do in the play) or not, she was certainly an ambitious and unscrupulous woman, and was not likely to look with much favour on a marriage which made her second instead of first, and would most probably destroy all hope of her husband ever rising to be King of England.

The Duchess
of Glou-
cester.

8. It began to be rumoured about that she took counsel with witches and magicians, and was plotting to destroy the king's life. It was whispered that they had made a waxen image of the king, which being set before a slow fire, and gradually wasting away, the king's life would waste away with it. Every one was quite ready to believe it. The duchess and her confederates were seized, examined, and found guilty. The sorcerer and the witch were put to death; the duchess was made to do public penance, walking barefoot through the streets of London carrying a taper, and pursued by the shouts and mockery of the mob. After this she was sent into perpetual imprisonment in the Isle of Man, which seemed almost like the end of the earth in those days.

9. Not long afterwards the duke himself was deprived of all

his offices, and charged with high treason. It is impossible to make out what he had really done, or if he had done anything, but he was sent to prison, and then the same thing happened to him which generally did happen in those days to important people whose enemies contrived to imprison them. In a week or

1447.
Deaths of
Gloucester
and Beau-
fort.

two's time it was made known that he was dead, just as it had been with that other Duke of Gloucester, who was put in prison at Calais in Richard II.'s time. No one had much doubt that he had been murdered, and it was believed that Cardinal Beaufort and the Duke of Suffolk, if not the queen herself, were guilty of his death. About six weeks after the cardinal himself died. Terrible stories were told about his death-bed, and how he was haunted by the ghost of his murdered nephew, though no one thought of the poor Maiden, whom his cruelty had doomed to a fearful death at Rouen. These stories, however, though they show the popular feeling with regard to the duke and the cardinal, were not true in fact; it appears that Beaufort died in a perfectly calm and decorous manner.

10. But if the Duke of Gloucester were really murdered, it was all to no purpose; a still more dangerous person came to the front in his place—the Duke of York, the son of that conspirator Richard who had been put to death at the beginning of Henry V.'s reign; the descendant of those Mortimers who had been always standing like dark shadows behind the throne of the Lancaster princes. Probably the claims of the Mortimers would never have been heard of again if Henry VI. had been like his father and grandfather. But he being so weak and helpless, and the country so divided and discontented, there was a fine opening for an ambitious prince. The Duke of York, however, made no sign at present of aiming at being more than the head of the party which opposed the queen and the peace with France. For a long time his principal rival was the Duke of Somerset, who was a relation of Cardinal Beaufort, and, like him, descended from John of Gaunt.

The Duke
of York.

11. The next person who died was the Duke of Suffolk. Everything in France was going from bad to worse; most of the blame was laid on him, and so now his turn came to be charged with high treason. He was trying to escape to Calais when he was caught by an English ship and murdered. None of the murderers were ever pursued

Death of
Suffolk.

and brought to justice, and it seemed they were most likely set on by some powerful man, who did not choose to appear—perhaps by the Duke of York. The people were still enraged at the reverses in France. The Bishop of Chichester, who had helped Suffolk in bringing in Margaret of Anjou, and in giving away the French provinces, was torn to pieces by the mob, but that did not get the provinces back.

12. At last the long war—the Hundred Years' War—seemed to wear itself out. The end of it was that, after all the fighting, all the glory, all the misery, England lost every inch she had ever possessed in France, except the town of Calais, and that she lost 100 years after. How little did Edward III. and the splendid young Black Prince, when they fought the battle of Crecy, guess what would be the end of it all!

End of the
Hundred
Years' War.

13. Nor were matters going on any better at home. Everybody was furiously dissatisfied; and soon after Suffolk's death the men of Kent rose up into a great rebellion, which reminds us somewhat of Wat Tyler's revolt before, though it differed from it in some ways. The head of this revolt was an Irishman, named Jack Cade; but he called himself by the more dignified name of Mortimer, and it was believed by some people that the Duke of York secretly encouraged him. Twenty thousand Kentish men, with Jack Cade at their head, met on Blackheath, and set forth their complaints. It is very interesting to look into these complaints and compare them with those of Wat Tyler seventy years before.

1450.
Rising of
Jack Cade
and the men
of Kent.

14. At that time, as we remember, the principal grievance was that all the poor people were "villeins," or serfs, and they demanded to have their freedom, and to be paid wages for their work. King Richard had at first promised this, but afterwards his promise was broken, and the rich men declared they would by no means part with their villeins. So we might have expected that, now they were rising again, we should hear something of the same complaints. But no; there is not a word about villeinage, or slavery, or wishing to be free. That had all passed away for ever; there were no slaves, no serfs, no villeins; everybody was free. Though Wat Tyler, John Ball, and so many others had been put to death, their revolt had borne its fruits, and the good work had been done. Villeinage had been done away with for ever.

15. What the people now complained of were mostly political matters; the most important of all the things they demanded was, that when members of parliament were elected the people should be allowed freedom to vote according to their opinions, and should not be interfered with; for at this time they were greatly hampered in exercising this right. It had been decreed that no one should be chosen as a knight of the shire, or county member, who was not a gentleman born; and the poorer voters received orders from the great men whom they were to vote for, whether they liked him or not. This very same practice almost caused a revolution in France so lately as the year 1877.

No doubt Jack Cade and his men were quite right in demanding perfect liberty in this respect, but it may be supposed they could not be very badly off in worldly affairs; they must have had plenty to eat and drink and wear, if they had time to care about votes, and members of parliament, and such matters.

16. However, the government sent an army against them; and after they had put forth papers, on which their complaints were written, the revolvers went back from Blackheath to Seven Oaks, where they fought the king's army, defeated it, and then marched up again to London. No one resisted them, and they passed through the streets till they came to London Stone, the very stone which had been set up by the Romans 1400 years before, as the first milestone from which they measured their roads. Jack Cade struck the old stone with his sword, and declared he was "lord of the city."

17. The revolt then went on much as Wat Tyler's had done; they behaved very well at first, and the London people made no opposition, but rather took their part. They seized on an unpopular minister, Lord Say, and after a sort of trial before the Lord Mayor they put him to death. But by and bye the revolvers put themselves all wrong. They began plundering and pillaging; the Londoners took fright, and when the insurgents retired to Southwark for the night the citizens broke down the bridge between them, and would not let them come back. Cade

and his followers were deceived by a false promise of pardon, and dispersed; Cade was pursued and put to death.

18. But of course that did not put an end to the discontent. People went on complaining, and very justly. The parliament (even such as it was now) hardly ever met, and money was raised without its consent, and without redressing anybody's grievances. So that now, in this disturbed condition of affairs, the Duke of

York saw his opportunity of coming forward more openly as a claimant of the crown. He began by attacking the Duke of Somerset, who was on the queen's side, and was a relation of the Lancastrian family, being descended from John of Gaunt. It was about this time that the Red and the White Roses were dragged into the quarrel. The red roses ^{Red and} ~~White Roses.~~ had long been the badge of the House of Lancaster; they had been first brought into Europe by the Crusaders from Palestine, and had been introduced into England 200 years before this time by Edmund, the second son of Henry III., who was the first Duke of Lancaster. His beautiful tomb in Westminster Abbey is ornamented with roses carved in stone. They are *grey* or *black* roses now, but when they were new they were doubtless painted red.

19. A very pretty story was told and believed in the middle ages about the creation of roses, which we may read in Sir John Mandeville's travels. He says that a certain fair maiden had been blamed with wrong and slandered, and condemned to be burnt; "and as the fire began to burn about her she made her prayers to our Lord, that, as truly as she was not guilty, He would by His merciful grace help her, and make it known to all men. And when she had thus said she entered into the fire, and immediately the fire was extinguished, and the faggots that were burning became red rose-bushes, and those that were not kindled became white rose-bushes, full of roses. And these were the first rose-trees and roses, both white and red, that ever any man saw."

20. But there were no gentle thoughts about roses now, when the fierce heads of each party, which had been so long scowling and growling from a distance, drew their followers together, and prepared to rush at one another. We may read in the play how the one side twitted the other. One man says that the Red Rose blushed for shame at the evil deeds of Somerset; another says the White Rose is pale for faint-heartedness and cowardliness.

21. After a little delay on each side, during which time the king and queen had a son born to them, the war broke out openly. The first battle was fought at St. Alban's. The Wars of the Roses lasted thirty years, from this first Battle of St. Alban's to the last one on Bosworth Field, and in that time there were twelve battles fought. Before we go any farther we will take a survey of the most prominent people engaged in them during those thirty years.

1455.
The war
begins.

22. We have already seen the sort of man King Henry VI. was, and how utterly unfit to cope with the disastrous times he had fallen on. After the first Battle of St. Alban's, when the Duke of York, though victorious, went to him, "making humble petition to him for pardon of

Henry. what was past," the king, "thoroughly affrighted, said, 'Let there be no more killing, then, and I will do whatever you will have me.'" By degrees it came to be observed, "as it were in the destiny of King Henry, that although he were a most pious man, yet no enterprise of war did ever prosper where he was." Shakespeare shows him to us sitting aside while a battle is raging, and wishing he had been born a poor shepherd, with simple cares and pleasures, humble fare, and peace and safety. "Ah, what a life were this! how sweet! how lovely!" he says. Thus, though he was loved, he was greatly despised too.

23. His wife Margaret was brave, spirited, and clever; but as time went on, and misfortunes thickened about her, she grew hard, cruel, and unwomanly. After one great battle, that of Wakefield, in which the Duke of York was taken prisoner, and his young son, the "pretty Rutland," slain, it was said that Queen Margaret mocked and jeered at him most savagely, gave him a handkerchief dipped in the poor boy's blood to wipe away his tears, and when he was beheaded caused his head to be set up on the gates of York, crowned in mockery with a paper crown. But no one can fail to admire her courage and perseverance. She was the mainspring of her husband's party. When things went ill she never gave in or lost heart; she went everywhere where she could hope to get help for him; to Scotland, to Burgundy, to France. Once, while she was wandering about with her son, who was but a child still, alone and on foot, in a thick and gloomy forest, they fell in with a robber; of whom there were always many, and very fierce, lurking about in such places. But Margaret's spirit rose higher with danger; she went boldly up to the rough outlaw, leading her boy by the hand, and saying, "This is the son of your king. I confide him to your care." The rough fellow, who had some generosity in his wild nature, was touched by her confidence, took them both under his protection, and led them in safety to their friends. A woman like this was sure to inspire her friends with enthusiastic devotion, and her enemies with deadly hatred.

24. Their great opponent, the Duke of York, was not himself so fierce and ambitious as some of the rest of his party, and he

tried for some time to preserve a kind of moderation. At one time, indeed, and after a battle in which his party was victorious, he agreed to a sort of compromise, something like the Treaty of Troyes in France ; by which it was proposed that Henry should be king as long as he lived, and the Duke of York would be content to be named as his heir, and reign after him. But as, of course, Queen Margaret would not sit down quietly under that, and see her boy disinherited, the war went on again, and the Duke of York was killed.

The Duke of York.

25. The death of the duke, however, did not end the war ; he left three sons to carry on the struggle, all more ambitious and vigorous than himself. One of the most delightful of English writers and English men, who, if he did not know them himself, knew those who did, Sir Thomas More, says of them, " All these three, as they were great estates by birth, so were they great and stately of stomach, greedy of promotion, and impatient partners of rule and authority." The eldest of them, Edward, who during the course of these wars became king as Edward IV., was a curious character, and though he was very popular, we cannot see that he deserved to be so. He was handsome and agreeable, and, unlike Henry VI., he was clever and unscrupulous, immoral in his private character, and, though seemingly amiable and kind, in his heart he was hard, cruel, and revengeful.

Edward of York.

26. The next brother, George, Duke of Clarence, though he too was " stately of stomach," was not so clever nor determined, but he was faithless and treacherous, as we shall see, and was used as a sort of tool by the stronger men he had to do with, till they threw him away.

Clarence.

27. The third, Richard, was one of the most remarkable characters in all English history. The old historians almost exhaust the language in describing his wickedness, and at the same time seem half awed by his wonderful intellect. Our common idea of him we gain from Shakespeare. Alas for any man whom Shakespeare describes as a villain ! to the end of time he will never be anything else.

Richard.

" I, that have neither pity, love, nor fear "

Shakespeare makes Richard say.

" Then since the heavens have shaped my body so,
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.
I have no brother ; I am like no brother ;
And this word ' Love,' which greybeards call Divine,

Be resident in men like one another,
And not in me."

Not long ago, however, a clever French writer gave this account of Richard III. : "The truth is, Richard was one of the greatest kings who ever reigned over England. As a general, he gained the battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury. As a sovereign, he was merciful, and caused the laws to be respected; he reformed abuses, and diminished taxes. As a man, he was violent, but courageous and sincere. Finally, far from being a monster in person, it appears that he was admirably handsome, well-made, and elegant." If this is the truth, it is to be feared that a great part of it will never get itself believed.

28. Baker's description of him is rather a contrast, and it is painted so very black that one feels inclined to soften it a little. "There never was in any man a greater uniformity of body and mind, both of them equally deformed. Of body he was but low; crook-backed, hook-shouldered, splay-footed, and goggle-eyed; his face little and round, his complexion swarthy, his left arm from his birth dry and withered. . . . Those vices which in other men are passions, in him were habits; and his cruelty was not upon occasion, but natural. . . . And to say the truth, he was scarce of the number of men who consist of flesh and blood, being nothing but blood." Sir Thomas More does not say quite so much about his bodily deformity, though he tells us he had what in high rank "is called a warlike visage, and among common persons a crabbed face." But he is most struck with his terrible hypocrisy and cold, cruel persistency. "He was close and secret," he writes, "a deep dissembler, lowly of countenance, arrogant of heart, outwardly familiar where he inwardly hated, not letting to kiss whom he thought to kill. . . . Friend and foe were all indifferent where his advantage grew; he spared no man's death whose life withstood his purpose." Thus we get the general opinion of him, which his acts, as far as we know them, bear out, that he was so deformed as to seem to himself and to others more a monster than a man; that he felt himself a kind of outcast from all that makes life dear to most men; that he scorned himself, and scorned everybody else, both man and woman. He gave all his mind to ambition; he determined to be king, and nothing, nobody should hinder him. That he did become king at last, and that all who stood between him and the crown came to an untimely end, is certain, but charity, and perhaps justice, would lead us to hope that he was not quite so black as he was painted.

29. But for a long time the most important person in all these conflicts was neither king, queen, nor prince. Of all the nobles at this time, the richest, the most powerful, and the most popular was the Earl of Warwick, of whom **The Earl of Warwick.** Hume says he was the greatest as well as the last of those mighty barons who formerly overawed the crown. He was the head of one of the greatest and richest of all the families in England, and was related to nearly all the others. Fuller can hardly find words enough to tell his greatness. "This was that Neville," he says, "who for extraction, estate, alliance, dependents, wisdom, valour, success, and popularity was superior to any English subject since the Conquest. People's love he chiefly purchased by his hospitality, keeping so open house that he was most welcome who brought the best stomach with him, the earl charitably believing that all who were men of teeth were men of arms. Any that looked like a man might have in his house a full half-yard of roast meat, namely, so much as he could strike through and carry away on his dagger. The bear was his crest, and it may be truly said that when the bear roared the lion of the forest trembled, the kings of England themselves being at his disposal." He had houses and castles in several parts of England, and altogether it was believed that 30,000 persons lived at his cost, and were more devoted to him than to any king or prince; so that he could do more than any one else for whichever side he favoured. For a long time he was on the White Rose side, and it was through his help and support that Edward of York was made king. But when, afterwards, Edward gave him offence he changed sides, joined himself to Margaret of Anjou, turned Edward out, brought Henry VI. from his prison, and set him on the throne again. For these exploits he was called the "king-maker." At last, in the great fight of Barnet, Warwick was killed, and could make no more kings, though no doubt he had still many schemes in his busy brain, for he had married his two daughters to two princes; one of the House of York, and one of the House of Lancaster; and one of those was Queen of England in course of time.

30. There is one other person who must be mentioned, the Earl of Richmond. We have not forgotten Queen Katherine, Henry V.'s French bride. After his death she had married a Welsh gentleman named Tudor. Though **Henry of Richmond.** it was very common in those days for members of the royal house to marry those who were not royal, so that half the noble families in England were related to the king, still they

generally only allied themselves with the high nobility, and this marriage of Queen Katherine was considered as greatly beneath her dignity, so that she fell into a sort of disrepute, and we hear no more about her, though she was probably much happier as a private lady than any of the unhappy queens who succeeded her. Her sons by the Welsh marriage were of course half-brothers to Henry VI., and one of them was made Earl of Richmond, and married to a lady of the House of Lancaster, daughter of the Duke of Somerset. And though such a distant and left-handed sort of relation, the son of those two came forward by and bye as the representative of the House of Lancaster, and became King of England in the end.

31. As for the rest of the actors in this great tragedy, we find that the Percies, perhaps remembering Henry V.'s generosity, were faithful to the House of Lancaster, but most of the nobility seem to have been guided by only selfish motives, and became as fickle and treacherous as they were cruel.

LECTURE XXXVII.—WARS OF THE ROSES.

The old nobility and their armies. End of the feudal system. Causes of the war. Condition of the people. Edward IV. His marriage. Vicissitudes.

1. It is hardly necessary to study and recollect all about these twelve battles,* and the changes and chances of the war. Sometimes one side conquered, and sometimes the other; in the end we may say *neither*, or perhaps *both* conquered, since a member of the House of Lancaster, marrying a member of the House of York, became undisputed king. But though we may be inclined to say then that the wars were all for nothing, and nothing came of them, they had in reality a very great effect on the whole future history and state of England. After those wars were over England was much more like what she is now, than she ever could have been without them.

2. In all the past history we have seen what an enormous power the nobles possessed; how they could help or hinder the king and the government just as they chose; how they rebelled and led armies about, fighting each other, or fighting the king, just as it happened; or if they had a strong, clever king, whom they respected, following him and fighting for him. How different all that is from anything we ever see or hear of now. Imagine now if we were to hear that some great duke or earl was going to lead an army against the government!

We all know it is impossible. Dukes and earls have no armies now. They may give their opinions, and advice, and vote in their own House; they may serve in the queen's army, as any other gentleman may, and that is all they can do. But up till this time the great lords had always little armies, or even rather large armies sometimes, of their own. They were bound indeed to have them; it was on that very condition they held their estates. The theory of the feudal system was, that the vassals

* A list of them will be found at the end of this lecture.

of the king were obliged to furnish so many men to help him in his wars. But when they did not like the king it was quite as probable that they would fit out those said men to oppose him, as we know Percy and the others did in the reign of Henry IV. If there were a rival claimant to the throne, some of the nobles would take one side and some the other, according as it suited their interest, or, perhaps, according as they thought was their duty.

3. In such times a rich nobleman, who had a large following, who could make himself popular, and perhaps hire many other soldiers besides his own under-vassals and tenants, would be very powerful indeed, even more powerful than the king himself, like Warwick, the king-maker. In those days there was no regular standing army, such as we have now, nor was there indeed for some hundreds of years after this. At that time everybody was a soldier, and nobody was a soldier. We can see how they managed in the play of *Henry VI*. In the course of this war Henry hears that his rival, Edward, has just landed from the Continent. He has no army ready at the moment, but he says, "Let's levy troops, and beat him back again." Then he and his friends arrange how to levy these troops. Each of the noblemen is to go to the place where he has most influence, and muster up his friends and their followers. The Earl of Warwick says—

"In Warwickshire I have true-hearted friends,
Not mutinous in peace, yet bold in war ;
These will I muster up : and thou, son Clarence,
Shalt stir in Suffolk, Norfolk, and in Kent,
The knights and gentlemen to come with thee :
Thou, brother Montague, in Buckingham,
Northampton, and in Leicestershire, shalt find
Men well inclined to hear what thou command'st :
And thou, brave Oxford, wondrous well beloved,
In Oxfordshire shalt muster up thy friends."

4. So when the nobles went to muster up an army, the ploughmen, the weavers, the labourers of all sorts would leave their work and follow them to fight. They were doubtless better soldiers than such men would be at present, for they were regularly trained and practised at certain times, and every man knew, more or less, how to fight, though they were not like the disciplined regiments we have now. In a little while, after a battle or two, perhaps, they would go back again to their work, to their ploughs or their looms. There were some regular soldiers too, whose regular profession was war, "companions," as

they were called, who were trained men, but who belonged to no side, and no chief, and could be hired by any party, city, or rich man who wanted them ; and who, when wanted by no one, generally became brigands.

5. At the time of the Wars of the Roses all the principal nobles of the kingdom took one side or the other, either that of York or Lancaster ; each brought his little army behind him, and it was they who fought those twelve battles. At the end of the wars they were nearly all gone, all killed. The family feeling was very strong in those times, and it was a point of honour for a man to revenge the deaths of his relations ; then the other side would revenge themselves in return, till we can hardly believe the men who worked these cruel deeds could have called themselves Christians at all. Thus one nobleman, Lord Clifford, had his father killed by the Yorkists. In revenge he stabbed that poor boy the Duke of Rutland, the son of the Duke of York. Afterwards, in revenge for that, he was himself killed by Rutland's brother. Thus the war became bitterly cruel and savage. Alas for chivalry !

The
nobles.

6. In looking over the pedigrees of those great old families it is quite startling to see how many times we read "killed at Tewkesbury," "killed at St. Albans," "beheaded after Wakefield," and the like. No less than four dukes of Somerset, one after the other, perished in these wars. The end of it was that the old nobility was almost destroyed, and the feudal system vanished for ever. Things began to be much more like what they are now ; so this period is generally looked on as the end of the middle ages, and the beginning of modern times.

7. We cannot suppose the great nobles, or anybody else, would have taken all this trouble, raised their armies, and hurried about all over the country, fighting, killing, and being killed, all for love of Henry or Edward, Lancaster or York. Had there not been some grave causes of discontent, it is pretty certain both York and Mortimer would have been forgotten, now that the Lancasters had been sitting on the throne for fifty years, whatever their exact rights might have been in the onset. But there was in fact a great deal of discontent, and a spirit of entire disaffection spread abroad among the nation. Every one was ashamed and disgusted at the disgraceful end of the French war, and the pride of the people was not much comforted by the death of the Duke of Suffolk, or the Bishop of Chichester. The state of England itself was also unsatisfactory. Jack Cade and the Kentish men, as we saw, had

Causes of
the war.

complained about the way parliaments were elected. A great many people who formerly used to vote for members were no longer allowed to do so at all, and many of those who still had votes had to give them according to orders, and not according to their own wishes. And parliament very seldom met at all. Nor was the government strong enough to keep the country quiet and peaceful. High and low were able to defy the law with impunity; the great families were continually carrying on little wars of their own; innumerable robbers ranged over the land, keeping the people in constant alarm and distress, and nobody had power to punish the evil-doers or protect the helpless and innocent.

8. Moreover, the House of Lancaster, both Henry IV. and Henry V., had, in their mistaken zeal for religion, made common cause with the Church, and had persecuted and burnt the Lollards. But though the Lollards appeared to be quite crushed and put down, in the bottom of their hearts immense numbers of people believed them to be right, and sympathized with them; so that when they had time to think, and were not dazzled and absorbed by Henry's splendid victories, it caused a vast deal of hidden discontent, and turned men's hearts away from their rulers.

9. Thus, with all these grievances, either spoken or unspoken, a great many people were ready for a change. Not that the princes of the House of York were at all likely to remedy any of these things, or ever did so, but that when people are dissatisfied they are willing to hope that any change will be for the better; though it had need to be very, very much better indeed to make up for the misery of a civil war. We have seen how cruel and hard-hearted the nobles became towards one another; what their followers were obliged to suffer we may imagine. In one beautiful passage which Shakespeare added to the old play of *Henry VI.* he paints it for us very vividly. He shows us how in one of these battles a father has unknowingly killed his own son, and a son his own father, who were fighting in opposite ranks; and as they both lament their cruel fortune, they think of what is so often forgotten, of the poor wife and mother at home, to whom they must carry the bitter news.*

10. But though sad and terrible things like this must often have happened, and though the nobles, many of them, became little better than murderers, there is a great consolation in knowing that, on the whole, the mass of the people did not suffer so much as might have been

The
people.

* Third Part of *King Henry VI.*, Act II. Scene v.

expected. In some of the battles the leaders on both sides gave orders that the poorer people were to be spared, and that only the principal men were to be killed. For the most part the people, except those who were dependent upon the nobles, took no part at all. The merchants and shopkeepers went on with their business; the judges went on circuit and held their assizes as if nothing was the matter. No towns, no churches were destroyed, and we have the comfort of thinking that those who made the quarrel bore the brunt of the punishment.

11. There is good reason to believe, in fact, that the poor people were better off than they ever were before; for while Edward IV. was king new laws were made to prevent them from spending too much money on their clothes. This subject seems to be always cropping up; we are perpetually having sermons and laws against finery, and very little good they seem to have done. In the very midst of the war a law was passed
1463.
beginning in this way: "The commons, as well men

as women, have worn, and daily do wear, excessive and inordinate array and apparel, to the great displeasure of God, and impoverishing of this realm of England." It goes on to command that common labourers, and servants, and their wives are never to wear cloth costing more than two shillings a yard; nor are they to wear girdles ornamented with silver. Another law was passed forbidding the wives to get their veils and handkerchiefs too fine. Thus it is evident they must have been well off, and receiving good wages, or they would never have thought of wanting expensive things of this kind.

12. But though the emancipation of the serfs had done a great deal of good, and the labourers were in this prosperous condition, some evil had come with it too, and that was that there were now a great many people who had no work and no wages at all. As we saw, after the plague of the Black Death, when there were so few men, and wages rose so high, many landlords would not or could not pay them. They left off tilling the land, and turned it into great sheep-farms. Then only two or three men would be wanted instead of a great many; and the sheep were very profitable, both for food and for their wool. Now there was this to be said in favour of villeinage, that the owner of the land had at least to feed, clothe, and shelter all his villeins, or to see that they had land enough to support them. Even when they were ill or old they still had to be maintained, and we never hear that they were badly treated in this respect.

13. But now that was all over; they were free, and their own

masters, and it seemed nobody's duty to look after them any longer. They had to try how they liked "a crust of bread and liberty." **The beggars.** There began to be a great many beggars: some "sturdy beggars," who would not work; others old and feeble, who could not work; others who could find no work to do. Some gave themselves out as "poor scholars;" indeed a certain number of students from Oxford and Cambridge were really allowed by the authorities to go about begging. It was very hard to know what to do with all these beggars; there was always the fear, that many of them might turn thieves, as, indeed, they often did. The government did their utmost, and passed a great many laws, many of them very harsh and cruel, about vagabonds and beggars; but it was a long time before they found out anything like a reasonable way of dealing with them, not till long after the period at which we have now arrived.

14. We must now see how some of the more distinguished people, the kings and princes, were behaving. The reign of Henry VI., if it can be called a reign, is generally reckoned to have ended after the Battle of Towton, which was

1461.
**Battle of
Towton.**

one of the most cruel and bloody of all the twelve, and in which the Lancastrians were utterly defeated. Henry and Margaret fled, and Edward IV. was crowned king. But the Wars of the Roses were by no means over yet, and it was not very long before he in his turn had to flee, and Henry, who had been caught and imprisoned in the Tower, came forth again as king. For though Edward was so clever, handsome, and popular, he contrived to give dire offence to the nobles who supported him, and above all to the Earl of Warwick, the king-maker. The way in which he did this was by choosing to make a love-match instead of marrying according to prudence or policy. The marriage he made was very much beneath his position, since, though his wife was a lady by birth and breeding, she was only the widow of an obscure gentleman, and, to make it still worse, her husband had been on the Lancastrian side.

15. In these wars it was the practice that whichever side conquered took revenge on the other, by depriving all the lords and gentlemen of their estates (even if they escaped with their lives), and dividing them among their own party; so that many great lords and gentlemen were reduced to literal beggary. They might be seen wandering about barefoot, and begging their bread in

France, while their enemies at home were sitting in their fine houses, eating their bread and spending their money. Amongst others there was one John Grey, of whom we read that "King Henry made him knight at the last Battle of St. Alban's, but little while he enjoyed his knighthood, for in the same field he was slain." His property had been confiscated, and his children were left destitute. His widow, who was young and beautiful, appeared before Edward to implore his compassion. The king was also young, and always ready to fall in love. The lady behaved very modestly and very cleverly; she quite won his heart; and, casting away all thought of prudence or worldly wisdom, Edward determined to marry her.

1464.
His
marriage.

16. The English had been very angry at Henry VI.'s marrying a princess who brought no dowry, and no high alliances; but assuredly this match would seem worse still, as Margaret had at least been a princess of royal blood. Moreover, Edward had half promised to marry a French princess himself, a sister of the Queen of France; and Warwick, who, besides being king-maker, would have wished to be queen-maker also, was very keen in promoting that alliance. He likewise wished Edward to give his sister in marriage to a French prince, but he chose to marry her to the Duke of Burgundy instead. It was also believed that Warwick would have desired Edward, if he married an English woman at all, to have married one of his own daughters.

Warwick is
offended.

17. Thus he was quite alienated from Edward, though he did not as yet take part with Henry. He first made friends with Edward's brother George, the Duke of Clarence, and gave him the daughter Isabel whom he had perhaps intended for the king. Through all these wars the nobles were constantly changing sides and betraying one another. Even the royal family itself was not faithful, and Clarence now conspired to betray his brother. Afterwards he changed again, and betrayed his father-in-law. He himself was finally betrayed and murdered.

For the present he and Warwick gave no sign of their intentions, and perhaps the king thought all went smoothly as a marriage bell. It would certainly seem as if no King of England ever read English history, for one foolish king after another did the same foolish things, which led to ruin and misery again and again. *We* all remember the trouble that came of making favourites; we remember Henry III.'s favourites, Edward II.'s,

Richard II.'s, and the ill fortunes that came on them all. But Edward IV. does not seem to have remembered it. He began just the same thing over again.

18. Perhaps he thought, as he had married greatly beneath his dignity, and his wife and her relations were looked down upon by all the aristocracy of the land, that it would set things right to make them noble now. Accordingly, all the greatest honours and riches were poured out upon them. Her father and her brothers received great titles and estates; her son was married to the heiress of the Duke of Exeter, whom Warwick wanted for his own nephew; her sisters were married to the richest young men who could be found, heirs of earls and dukes, whom the lords would have liked to marry their own daughters. All this, therefore, instead of setting things right, angered the Earl of Warwick and the rest of the old nobility beyond bearing.

19. Except for their being "upstarts," however, there was nothing to be said against these relations of the queen. One of them in particular, her brother, Lord Rivers, was good, accomplished, and faithful. But their glory was short-lived, and they paid very dear for it. At last things came to an open rupture,

1470.

and Warwick, forsaking Edward, allied himself with his most bitter enemy, Margaret of Anjou, who had never ceased stirring and striving to reinstate her husband and son. He now married his other daughter to her son Edward, so that he had, we may say, two strings to his bow—two daughters who might, in the changes of that changing time, come to be queens of England. This second daughter, Anne, was indeed queen for a short time, though not at all by the means her father expected.

20. As soon as Warwick appeared in England the people, who loved and admired him, flocked around him in crowds. Edward had to flee out of the country, and to flee in such haste that he took nothing with him, and had no means of paying the captain of the ship which carried him across, but by giving him a cloak lined with sable. As to his poor wife, whom he left behind him, as well as his luggage, she took refuge with her young daughters in the sanctuary at Westminster.

21. Here we may see once again the good influence which, with all its faults, the Church was able to exercise in those troubled times. In our days, when the law is supreme, when every one gets justice done, and no one can injure another without being punished for it, we

Sanctu-
aries.

have no need of these sanctuaries. Indeed, even in those days the good they did was mixed with evil ; for it appears that " a rabble of thieves, murderers, and malicious heinous traitors " were sometimes harboured there. But notwithstanding that, when people were so bitter, and so fierce and bloodthirsty, and when the country was divided into two parties, always longing to murder one another, this right of sanctuary, the protection of a sacred place, saved many innocent lives. The priests were very brave in defence of the fugitives who took refuge in the churches, for sometimes the savage soldiers would pursue them even there. Once King Edward himself did so with his followers ; but the priest, taking the sacrament in his hands, threw himself between him and his victims, and would not move till the king promised to pardon them all. Sometimes, treacherous as men were in those days, people would be tempted out with false promises of pardon ; but on the whole it is believed that 2000 lives were saved in London alone by the protection of the sanctuaries.

22. Here the poor queen took shelter, and here her unhappy little son Edward V. was born. Shakespeare makes her say, " Small joy have I in being England's queen." Katherine of France, who was so despised for descending to marry a private gentleman, was, perhaps, a good deal wiser and happier than Elizabeth Woodville, who rose from being a private lady to marry a king. However, it was not very long before Edward returned. His brother Clarence was treacherous again, and deserted Warwick. Two great battles were fought, in both of which Edward was victorious. The first was at Barnet, and there Warwick, the king-maker, was slain ; the second was at Tewkesbury, and it utterly ruined the Lancastrian house. The young Prince Edward, son of Henry and Margaret, was brutally murdered ; it is said by Edward's two brothers, Clarence and Gloucester. Margaret was made prisoner, and Henry was taken back to the Tower, where he very soon after died. The Yorkists gave out that he died of a broken heart, but everybody believed that he was murdered, and Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, had all the credit of it, whether he really deserved it or not. The people soon began to look on King Henry as a saint, and said that wonderful miracles were worked at his tomb.

1471.

**Death of
Henry.**

23. Margaret of Anjou, whose brave struggle had ended so fatally, and who had now nothing left to struggle for, was kept a prisoner for five years. At last the King of France paid 50,000

crowns for her ransom, and she was allowed to go back to France, where she lived for the few remaining years of her desolate life. But though the royal family of Lancaster was thus broken up and extinguished, the end was not come yet. There still lived young Richmond, descended from John of Gaunt, who was to make himself heard in due time.

24. Not very long after these battles and murders, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, married Anne, that daughter of the Earl of Warwick who had been the wife of poor Edward Plantagenet, son of Henry. By and bye, as the wife of Richard, she did really become Queen of England, and still more than Elizabeth Woodville might she say, "Small joy have I in being England's queen." As to her courting by Gloucester, it must be read in the play of *Richard III.* (Act I. scene ii.).

THE TWELVE BATTLES.

- 1455. St. Alban's.
- 1459. Bloreheath.
- 1460. Northampton.
- " Wakefield.
- 1461. Mortimer's Cross.
- " St. Alban's.
- " Towton.
- 1464. Hexham.
- 1469. Banbury.
- 1471. Barnet.
- " Tewkesbury.
- 1485. Bosworth.

LECTURE XXXVIII.—THE END OF THE WAR.

Caxton and the printing-press. Richard III. His victims. Murder of the young princes. Henry Tudor. Battle of Bosworth Field.

1. WHILE all these events were taking place among the illustrious heads of the nation, there was going on in the precincts of Westminster Abbey a work far more important and interesting than the battles, victories, defeats, or marriages of all the kings and queens in the world. That beautiful abbey, round which so much of English history clusters, had seen many splendid sights—gorgeous coronations, stately funerals; but the work that was doing there now was so quiet, so humble, in the midst of all the clash of arms and dynasties, that comparatively few people knew or cared much about it; and yet it made a greater change and a happier change than almost any other work we know of; it was the first introduction into England of the art of printing.

2. To realize how great that work was we have only to try and think how we should feel without it now; how we should do without our Bibles and prayer-books, our histories and poems, our tales and newspapers. Four hundred years ago perhaps none of us should ever have seen such a thing. It was noticed a few pages back how coming events were casting their shadows before. The higher classes were beginning to care more and more for books, and not to leave them any longer to priests and monks. The richer ones had collected fine libraries, and others, who were not so rich, still had some books of their own, and could read and enjoy them.

3. When we go into a strange house, not knowing much of the people who live in it, one of the first things we do, if we can, is to cast an eye over their bookshelves, and by seeing the books they read, we judge a little what sort of people they are. So if we could know the sort of books which our forefathers read we should feel a little more intimate and acquainted with them. We are fortunate enough to have got a catalogue of a private gentleman's library (preserved almost by chance) just before printing was invented. There

An old
library.

were altogether about thirty books. There was no Bible among them, but there were a few books of religion and morality: one a sort of prayer-book; one a legend, or life of a saint; and some of Cicero's writings on friendship, wisdom, and old age. One was about the blazonings, crests, and coats of arms, which all gentlemen thought so much of; some were about the duties of knights and the laws of the land. Then there were some of Chaucer's poems, and several tales and romances, some of which were perhaps thought to be English history, since there was one about King Arthur, and one about Richard Cœur de Lion. It would not be at all disagreeable to be shut up for a few months in a country house with these thirty books as companions.

4. We know too how much they cost, for there is the bill of the man who wrote them out for Sir John Paston, their owner. It appears that the copyist got twopence a leaf for prose, and a penny a leaf for poetry (where, of course, the lines would be shorter), and something extra for "rubrication," or decorating the pages with red initial letters, and so on, like the "rubric" of a prayer-book. The price of one leaf ornamented a little in this way would have been in our money about two shillings, and a whole book would be therefore very costly.

5. But just now something began to be heard of a marvellous art in Germany, by which copies were made wonderfully fast, and sold wonderfully cheap. What a copyist would expect 500 crowns for producing could be sold for sixty crowns! It was not wonderful that at first people thought this must have something to do with the black art, and that the man who did it got the credit of being a magician, though he was only sending out copies of the Bible, which we should not think the devil would be very eager to do.

6. There happened to be living in Flanders at this time a very intelligent Englishman, William Caxton, who had been the apprentice of a London mercer, but had gone abroad, most likely, on some mercantile business. Flanders at that period belonged to the Duke of Burgundy; and as it was very important both to Flanders and to England that they should be good friends, on account of the trade between the two countries, Edward IV. had married one of his sisters to the Duke of Burgundy. This English duchess was very kind to our Londoner. Caxton, though he had been bred a mercer, was fond of literary work, and of books; and at this time he was translating into English a French book about 'The History of

Troy.' The duchess took great interest in it, and even helped him in some parts. And as he expected a great many people would like to read it, he made up his mind that, instead of having it copied out by hand, he would try the strange new invention, and have it printed.

7. He knew well enough that there was no magic in it, and he took great pains to learn the whole art. His book was finished at Bruges, and was the first English book that was ever printed. He gave this account of it himself: 1471.

"Thus end I this book, which I have translated out of mine author as nigh as God hath given me cunning, to whom be given the laud and praising. And for as much as in the writing of the same my pen is worn, mine hand weary, and not steadfast, mine eyes dimmed with overmuch looking on the white paper, and my courage not so prone and ready to labour as it hath been, and that age creepeth on me daily and feebleth all the body, and also because I have promised to divers gentlemen and to my friends to address to them as hastily as I might this said book, therefore I have practised and learned, at my great charge and dispense, to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as ye may here see; and is not written with pen and ink, as other books be, to the end that every one may have them at once." Although he complains so pathetically of being old and feeble, he was really not quite sixty when he wrote this, and he went on working for about twenty years longer.

8. Five or six years afterwards he came to England, and settled himself in the precincts of Westminster Abbey. It is not quite clear why he chose that place for his labours. Perhaps it was because, hitherto, nearly, if not quite all, the writing and copying had been done in monasteries. Every monastery had a room called the "copying-room," where the writers sat writing and sometimes beautifully ornamenting the books, so it may have seemed the most natural thing for this new kind of copying to be done there too. Or, again, Caxton may have thought that it would save him from the charge of sorcery to do his work in so holy a place, under the sanction of the abbot; and the "sanctuary" too would be a protection to him if he came into any danger.

9. In England he was favoured by the king and the royal family, including Richard, as in Bruges he had been by the Duchess of Burgundy; and especially by the queen's brother, Lord Rivers, who, besides being a learned and accomplished gentleman, was an author himself, and had written a book

called 'The Dictes, and notable wyse Sayings of the Phylosophers;' and that book was the first ever printed in England.

1477. Soon after two other books were written by him, and printed by Caxton; the last one he wrote when he was thirty-six years old, only three years before his untimely death.

10. Some of the other books which Caxton printed and published were a history and a geography of our own country; a book giving an account of the universe as far as it was understood (or misunderstood) at that time, showing how "the earth holdeth right in the middle of the world" (or universe, as we should say), and giving a description of the "celestial paradise." He also printed Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales,' some of Gower's writings, the story of 'Reineke Fuchs,' or 'Reynard the Fox,' 'Æsop's Fables,' and the 'History of Arthur and his Knights,' as it had been newly written by an Englishman; some other tales and romances, legends of saints, and several religious books. One cannot help feeling sorry that among all these he did not print the Bible; but at this time it was forbidden by law to circulate Wycliffe's Bible, and had he printed it most likely he and his printing-presses would have come to a very summary end. There seems little doubt that he was a simple-hearted, religious man, and when beginning any work he would offer a short prayer that he might be able to bring it to a good end, "to the honour and glory of Almighty God."

Some of the very books he printed are to be seen now in the British Museum.

11. Though Caxton and his work are much more interesting than Edward IV., we must now go back to him, who no doubt thought himself of far more importance. Having conquered all his opponents at home, he began to think of making himself busy abroad, and going to war with France again, which the English were generally glad enough to do. For this purpose, of course, plenty of money was required, and though the parliament, in a lawful way, gave him a large sum, he still thought he wanted more. With all his apparent good nature, Edward had a strong will and arbitrary character. He did not like to be dependent on parliament for money or anything else, yet he did not dare, as some kings had tried to do before him, to lay on taxes without its consent. He bethought him of a very ingenious expedient, which was to ask the rich citizens out of kindness to give him a large sum of money, which was called a **Benevolences**. "benevolence," or token of good will. In truth, the

citizens would much rather not have given it, but they dared not refuse; "as though," says More, "the name of *benevolence* had signified that every man should pay not what he himself of his good will list to grant, but what the king of his good will list to take." So, though bearing so pleasing a name, it was to all intents and purposes an additional tax, and we shall hear more about the effects of the ingenious idea by and bye. Meanwhile, though he got so much money, the war came to nothing.

12. There was a new King of France now, Louis XI., who was as wicked as the worst France ever had, and much more clever than most of them. He did not wish to go to war with England, having his hands full of other business, so by skill and bribes he contrived to make friends with Edward and his counsellors and send them all back to England. The two kings met, but their first interview was a very singular one; it took place on a bridge over the river Somme, not far from Amiens. Nobody had yet forgotten the murder of the Duke of Burgundy by the dauphin on the bridge at Montreau; accordingly, these two civilized, polished, and Christian kings could not approach each other without as great precautions as if they had been wild beasts. Across the middle of the bridge a strong barricade was set up, consisting of a firm grating or lattice work, such as lions' cages are made of; the space between the bars was just wide enough to admit a man's arm. The two kings bowed to each other in the most polite and respectful manner, one on each side of the barrier, and then embraced each other through the holes of the grating. After a long and friendly conversation, in which the chronicler tells us the King of England spoke very good French, they shook hands through the grating, and parted. Soon afterwards Edward returned to England with very little glory but plenty of French money.

13. All this time Richard was still watching his opportunity, never flinching in his determination to arrive at the throne at last, no matter who stood in his way. The enemies of his house, Henry VI. and his son, being dead, and Henry of Richmond being banished to Brittany, there only remained his own near relations. The next one to die was his brother Clarence, who was older than he, and therefore had a better chance. Clarence had already played the traitor twice, but he does not appear to have done any harm since. His wife was the sister of Richard's wife, and he had two young children. Edward was now induced to charge him with treason, and, stranger still, with

necromancy, or magic, and to commit him to the Tower. Once in the Tower, we may be sure of what happened next. In ten days he was dead. How he died could never be

1478.
Death of exactly known, though it was said he was drowned
Clarence. in a butt of Malmsey wine. Richard gets all the credit of this murder also.

14. Five years after that (though Shakespeare makes it happen when Edward was on his death-bed) the king died, leaving all the nobles ready to fly at each other's throats as soon as he was gone. The hatred between the older nobles and the queen's relations was as virulent as ever. Edward tried to make up a kind of peace between them as he lay dying, but the hollow promises they made to please him were not likely to be kept.

15. As soon as he died the struggle began. On the one side were the poor little boy, Edward V., who was about thirteen years old, his brother Richard, two years younger, his mother, her brother and other relations, and some few nobles who were faithful to them; on the other the proud, cruel, remorseless Richard, with some of the most powerful of the nobles, who hated the queen's family, though they meant no ill to the young princes. The most important were the Duke of Buckingham, who was a relation to the family of Lancaster, and Lord Hastings. Of these two we hear that they did not bear "to each other so much love, as hatred both to the queen's blood." Edward V. was only king, or the little shadow of a king, for three months, and was never crowned, though he is always reckoned among the kings of England.

16. When his father died the young prince was at Ludlow Castle, on the borders of Wales, where he was being educated by his uncle, Lord Rivers, the same who had helped Caxton, and who had collected the sayings of the philosophers. Being a gallant and accomplished man, he was a very suitable person to educate a young king, and it appears that he was bringing him up with great tenderness and wisdom, and that Edward was much attached to him. His only fault appears to have been that he was the queen's brother.

17. Richard determined to get his young nephews into his own power, and to separate them from their mother and her relations, who would protect them. He had no great difficulty before him so far, because of the jealousy felt by the rest of the nobility against these mushroom lords. Richard used this jealousy very skilfully for his

Richard's
designs.

own purposes ; the Duke of Buckingham, especially, "promised to wait upon him with a thousand good fellows, if need were."

18. The first thing he did was to go to meet the young king, who was travelling up from Ludlow for his coronation, and to remove him from his uncle, his half-brother, and other friends and attendants. The poor boy "wept, and was not content, but it booted not." Lord Rivers and the others were sent off to Pomfret Castle, where they were very soon after beheaded without any trial.

19. When the queen heard that Richard had taken possession of the young king, though he still kept up all outward forms of propriety, and pretended that he did it for his greater good, her heart misgave her, and she fled once more to the sanctuary, taking the little Richard, Duke of York, with her, and there she sate "alone on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed."

20. She was soon over-persuaded to give the child up, the Archbishop of Canterbury being sent by the Duke of Gloucester with many fair words and arguments to prevail on her. But it was with doubt and fear that she consented. "And therewithal," writes More, "she said to the child, 'Farewell, mine own sweet son ; God send you good keeping ; let me once kiss you ere you go, for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again ;' and therewith she kissed him and blessed him, and turned her back and wept, going her way, leaving the poor innocent child weeping as fast as the mother."

The Duke of Gloucester was appointed Protector of the kingdom, and the two little princes were sent to the Tower, "after which day they never came abroad." "Rough cradle for those little pretty ones," said their mother.

The young
princes sent
to the
Tower.

21. Now that these helpless children, his last rivals, were in his power, Richard began to aim more openly at the crown. But some who had followed him thus far now began to hang back ; Lord Hastings, in particular, would not betray the sons of his late master.

In all these transactions what seems to have struck people most was Richard's wonderful hypocrisy. We read how he came into the council with a smiling face, as though thinking of nothing amiss, and talking to the Bishop of Ely about the fine strawberries which grew in his garden at Holborn (where the little lane called Ely Place now is) ; and then coming in again, an hour or two after, pretending to have found out a dreadful plot in the interval, "all changed, with a sour, angry countenance,

knitting the brows, frowning and fretting, gnawing of his lips," and declaring he will not dine till he has Lord Hastings' head.

22. Sir Thomas More tells all this as vividly as if he had seen it with his own eyes. He probably learnt it from Morton, the Bishop of Ely, who had such fine strawberries, and who really did see and hear it all. But as this Morton was imprisoned by Richard, and was afterwards one of his most active opponents, we must conclude that he would hardly be an impartial observer, and perhaps gave Richard a more dreadful character than he really deserved.

23. Even after the execution, or rather the murder of Hastings, the Duke of Buckingham still supported Richard and helped him in all his devices. They tried hard to get the people of London to side with them, and to cry out for "King Richard." Richard set himself forth "as a godly prince, clean and faultless of himself, sent out of heaven into this vicious world for the amendment of men's manners." They got a clergyman to preach for him, and to say that all the royal family, his two dead brothers, and his two young nephews, all excepting himself, were illegitimate, and that there was no one to compare with Richard; but the people "stood as if they had been turned to stones." Then the Duke of Buckingham himself made a fine speech to the citizens, all about the goodness of Richard, and the safety, wealth, and prosperity they would enjoy were he once king; and he spoke so eloquently "that every man much marvelled, and thought that they never heard in their lives so evil a tale so well told." Nevertheless, the citizens were "as still as midnight."

24. Richard still would not actually seize on the crown by force; he knew very well that the English were a people "whom

Richard is no man earthly can govern against their wills." At
made king. last the parliament, the lords and commons, were over-persuaded to come to him and offer him the crown. He pretended to be very unwilling to accept it, and they then, headed by the Duke of Buckingham, assured him that if he refused they would choose some other king. All this hanging back and persuasion were, in fact, nothing but a kind of play-acting arranged by Richard and Buckingham in secret, and when it had gone far enough Richard condescended to accept that which he was longing for, telling the parliament that his title of birth was now joined to the election of the nobles and commons of the realm, "which," said he, "we, of all titles possible, take for most effectual."

25. He was now solemnly proclaimed, and was crowned, like

the best of English kings, at Westminster Abbey. He offered offerings at St. Edward's shrine, "while the monks sang *Te Deum* with a faint courage." His wife was crowned with him, and her train was borne by the Countess of Richmond, the mother of Henry, who was biding his time in Brittany. We do not know what she might be thinking as she walked behind the new queen, but we know that there was trouble in store for Richard already. The Duke of Buckingham, his most fast friend and ally, had begun to turn against him in secret, whether from jealousy or some personal grudges. He appeared at the coronation gorgeously apparelled, but he "rode with an evil will, and worse heart."

26. Richard, however, began his reign very well. He really seemed for a time to deserve those high praises which the Frenchman gives him. After his coronation he sent the nobles who had attended it back into their own countries, giving them "strait charge and commandment to see their countries well ordered, and that no wrong nor extortion should be done to his subjects." He summoned a parliament; he declared he would restore the old liberties of England, and abolish all oppression such as his brother had practised, especially those "benevolences," which were so heartily disliked. He protected and helped the merchants; he encouraged literature, and the printing and selling of books. He set free a few bondmen who were still living on the royal estates (for though it might be said broadly there were no serfs or villeins left, strictly speaking, there lingered yet a few, though hardly enough to be noticed). He did, in short, all he could to win popularity.

He rules
well.

27. But not all this could make people forget his crimes. And now he added one more, the most horrible of all, and the one which makes his name to be shuddered at to this hour—the murder of the innocent children in the Tower. Of course, like all the rest of those murders, it could never be exactly proved, but every one believed that the two little princes were smothered in their bed, and every one believes it now.

Death of the
princes.

After that no one any longer cared for his just government, or his abolishing the benevolences. Every one loathed and abhorred him as a fiend in human shape. "When the fame of this detestable fact," says More, "was revealed and divulged through the whole realm, there fell generally such a dolour and inward sorrow into the hearts of all the people, that they in every town, street, and place openly wept and piteously sobbed." Whenever there was a great thunderstorm, or a tempestuous wind, "they did

openly cry and make vociferation that God would take vengeance, and punish the poor Englishmen for the crime and offence of their ungracious king."

28. And now what had been threatened in a sort of jest, when Richard and Buckingham had acted their play together, began to be thought of in earnest. People began to look out for another king. The royal houses of York and Lancaster were all but

Henry Tudor
comes
forward.

extinct; of Lancaster not one legitimate member remained; but there was still that Henry Tudor of whom we have already heard, and who had begun to be looked on as the representative of the Red Rose. Henry VI., who was now regarded as a saint, was said to have prophesied of him that he should be king, and "England's bliss," and the enemies of Richard set all their hearts and hopes upon him. To make his title better, it was proposed that he should marry the Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Edward IV.; thus both the rival houses, the Red and the White Roses, would be at last united.

29. But Richard thought to be beforehand with them there. His first plan was to marry the princess to his own only son, but

The Princess
Elizabeth of
York.

he died just about this time. Richard had shown before now that he would stop at nothing; and though he had a wife already, he determined to put her out of the way, and marry his own niece Elizabeth sooner than let Henry Tudor win her. He expected to gain the Pope's consent to this marriage, though it was contrary to all the laws of the Church and the country; but the Popes, who, as we have seen, professed to have the power of dispensing men from keeping their oaths and promises, considered themselves also entitled to dispense them from obeying the most sacred laws in other matters, and in this of marriage more particularly. He would perhaps have succeeded in gaining the Pope's permission, since he gained what we should have thought far more difficult, the consent of the princess and her mother Elizabeth.

But though poor Queen Anne died just at the convenient season, yet the whole country was so disgusted and so averse to this unnatural marriage that it had to be given up, and in due time Henry Tudor got the princess for himself.

30. Meanwhile nearly all the most important people in the country were joining Henry's party; amongst them Morton, the Bishop of Ely, who had been imprisoned by Richard, but had made his escape. The Duke of Buckingham also revolted openly. He perceived that Richard was "disdained of the lords temporal,

execrate and accursed of all the lords spiritual, detested of all gentlemen, and despised of all the commonalty." Well might he say, as Shakespeare makes him do, "There is no creature loves me."

31. Henry's first attempt at invasion failed, and after it the Duke of Buckingham was captured and beheaded; but the prince soon came again, landing in Wales, where he had many friends, being partly a Welshman himself. On his march forward more and more adherents joined him. He and Richard met at Bosworth Field, near Leicester. Richard, with all his faults, was very courageous, and he fought bravely now, but all in vain. It was perhaps quite true, as Henry says in the play—

1485.
Battle of
Bosworth
Field.

"Richard except, those whom we fight against
Had rather have us win than him they follow."

This was the last battle of the Wars of the Roses, and it was quite characteristic of those wars that its fate was decided by treachery, or, if we can hardly call it treachery, by one of the principal leaders of Richard's army going over to Henry's side. This was Lord Derby or Stanley, who was stepfather to Henry; for though his mother was always called Countess of Richmond, she had, after the death of Henry's father, married the Earl of Derby. Richard was therefore very suspicious of him; so much so that he kept his son George as a hostage, and when he saw that Derby had deserted him he instantly exclaimed, "Off with George Stanley's head." But the rest, not knowing yet how the battle might turn, thought it more prudent to wait a little before obeying, and so the young man's life was saved. Richard was defeated and killed; his crown was found hanging on a hawthorn bush on the battle-field, and was placed by Lord Derby on the head of the victorious Henry.

In the stained glass windows of Henry VII.'s Chapel in Westminster Abbey, besides the union of the Red and White Roses, which appears over and over again, we may see also the picture of the hawthorn tree of Bosworth Field, with the golden crown above it.

LECTURE XXXIX.—THE RENAISSANCE.

Peace after war. Henry VII. His character. He suppresses the power of the nobles. England prospers. Discovery of America. The revival of learning.

1. "FROM town to town, from tower to tower,
The Red Rose is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The Red Rose is revived at last.
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming ;
Both Roses flourish, Red and White,
In love and sisterly delight ;
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended."

So sang, or so might sing, the minstrels after this victory which brought again peace to England. But, though the time was such a joyful one, there is not much very interesting to be said about Henry VII. himself. He was not like any of the kings we have had to do with lately ; not a hero like Henry V., nor a saint like Henry VI., nor a murdering fiend like Richard III. He was what we may call commonplace. "As his face was neither strange nor dark, so neither was it winning nor pleasing," says his biographer ; and much the same might be said of his character.

He was very prudent and sensible. He married Elizabeth of York, though he does not seem to have been very fond of her. He was formally accepted as king by the parliament, and he took care not to get embroiled with it at any future time.

2. All the Tudor sovereigns were noted for having what we call "a will of their own," and had a great inclination to be despotic. Henry VII. had this too, but he contrived to gratify it without openly breaking the laws. He by no means liked to be shackled and controlled by parliament, and very seldom allowed it to meet. Of course the great difficulty about this was the money ; but as Henry loved money just as well as he loved his own will, he contrived, without exactly breaking the law, to get a great deal.

3. At one time he professed to be going to war with France. Then he summoned parliament, and induced them to vote him large supplies, after which he did not go to war at all, but kept the money. He followed Edward IV.'s example in raising "benevolences," which Richard III. had abolished; but, as the rich citizens liked paying them no better than before, they soon came to be called "malevolences." His principal minister and prime counsellor for a long time was Morton, the Bishop of Ely, the same who grew such fine strawberries in Holborn, and who was afterwards promoted to be archbishop, cardinal, and legate. He aided his master very cleverly in the matter of "benevolences." For if a man lived handsomely, in a fine house, with plenty of servants, the bishop would say it was evident he was a wealthy man, and had money to spend; and "there is no reason," said he, "but for your prince's service you should do so much more, and therefore you must pay." But if a man lived humbly and frugally, making no show at all, then it was evident that he must have saved up a good deal, as he spent so little; "therefore, be content, you must pay." This was called "Morton's fork," because if a man could slip off one prong he got caught on the other.

**Morton's
fork.**

4. Towards the end of his reign the king got two gripping, cunning lawyers, Empson and Dudley, to help him. They raked up all sorts of old statutes and pretexts for screwing money out of people, by fair means or unfair, and made themselves hated and dreaded by all the people in the land.

5. In all these ways Henry contrived to get a large hoard of money, and was able to go on year after year without summoning parliament, and to rule just as he and his friends and counsellors chose. Besides keeping the parliament down in this way, he took great pains to lessen the power of the nobles, and enforced a very stern law against their keeping such bands of retainers and armed followers as made them formidable. Edward IV. had already tried to break down this power, and Henry did so still more; they were determined to have no more noblemen like the Earl of Warwick, who could make or unmake kings at his pleasure.

**Power of
the nobles
diminished.**

6. Henry once went to pay a visit to the Earl of Oxford, who had been one of the greatest supporters of the House of Lancaster (as we may read in 'Anne of Geierstein'). The Earl received him with great honour, and two long lines of retainers, wearing his livery, were drawn up to receive him. These

retainers in their master's livery were just what Henry was determined to put down; so when he took leave of the earl, having first inquired whether all these men were his household servants, and hearing that they were not servants, but retainers, Henry said, "I thank you for your good cheer, my lord, but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight. My attorney must speak with you." And the earl had to pay a fine of £10,000, and was very glad to escape perhaps without paying his head too.

7. Though the noblemen were still very grand outwardly, they thus lost much of their power, and never recovered it. The Wars of the Roses had probably made them much poorer also, even those who had escaped with their lives. They seem to have lived in what we should think a very rough and rude way, and were extremely economical in some matters. One of them, the Earl of Northumberland, left a very curious book behind him, a sort of account book, which tells us a good deal about the household ways of a great lord.

8. This earl had three country houses in Yorkshire, and he divided his time between them, but he had only furniture for one. So when he moved from one to another he

**A noble-
man's house-
keeping.** had to take all his things — beds, tables, chairs, kitchen utensils—after him, in carts and waggons.

The servants who took care of the kitchen things, the pots and pans, and such like, were called the "black guard;" and as they were probably the lowest of all the household, that name came by degrees to mean any kind of low, coarse, rude person. My lord and my lady had breakfast every day at seven o'clock; not a very refined one, we should call it. They had a quart of beer and a quart of wine, half a chine of boiled beef or mutton, or, on fasting days, salt fish, red herrings, or sprats. For dinner they would have sometimes chickens, geese, pork, or peacocks. Turkeys were quite unknown. A chicken cost a halfpenny; a goose threepence or fourpence; a pheasant or a peacock a shilling.

9. They had not yet learnt how to feed cattle all the year, so they seem only to have had fresh beef between Midsummer and Michaelmas; the servants lived on salt meat nearly all the year round, with very few vegetables. Every one was kept in high order. The mass was said every morning at six o'clock, so that all the servants might be obliged to get up early. They had orders how many slices of meat were to be cut out of each joint; they had orders even how to make their mustard, begin-

ning in a very lordly way : "It seemeth good to us and to our Council ;" they had orders how many fires were to be lighted ; and very cold they must often have been, since no fires were allowed after Lady-day, except for my lord, and my lady, their eldest son, and in the nursery.

10. The grand economy of all, however, appears to have been in linen and washing. In the whole establishment (166 persons, and more than fifty strangers daily) there were nine table-cloths ; there were no sheets at all ; and the washing-bill for the whole year was forty shillings, including the linen belonging to the chapel. The dirt in those days must have been awful ! No doubt the reason my lord and my lady travelled about from one house to another, at so much inconvenience, must have been the same which caused Queen Elizabeth afterwards to make many royal progresses, namely, that the house or palace after a time became dreadfully dirty, or, as an old writer says, "with continual usage the house waxed unsavoury," so that it was necessary to move on to another.

11. The more to keep down the overweening power of the nobility, Henry encouraged the middle classes, who were constantly rising into importance ; not only the rich merchants of the towns, but also the farmers and yeomen of the country. On the whole, we may say he did the country good ; after the long wars and disturbances there was peace and order, and the laws were respected (at least in the letter).

12. In his time, too, the first real steps were taken towards uniting the whole island of Great Britain, which had been so long at variance with itself. Many efforts had already been made to draw all the different races inhabiting it into one nation under one head. Ever since the old times, when the greater of the English kings before the Norman Conquest had made the princes of Wales and Scotland do homage to them, it had been attempted at intervals. Edward I. had conquered Wales ; he had also striven, though in vain, to conquer Scotland. But now time was peacefully preparing what had never succeeded by war and conquest.

**Progress
towards
unity in
Great
Britain.**

13. Though Wales had been conquered by Edward I., the Welsh had never been easy under the English rule, and were always ready to rebel, as they did under Owen Glendower, in Henry IV.'s time. But now that a Welshman was King of England they became quite reconciled to their position, no longer looking upon themselves as a conquered people, but as a

part of the same nation ; and from this time onward we hear of no more troubles in Wales.

14. Henry VII. also paved the way for the union of England and Scotland, which had been such dangerous and harassing neighbours to each other for centuries, by marrying his daughter Margaret to the King of Scotland. A great deal of trouble came out of that marriage for a time, but the end of it was that at last the royal families of England and Scotland became one.

15. Thus, though Henry was an uninteresting and unheroic character, his reign was, on the whole, of service to the country.

He made what seemed a very prudent match for his eldest son, Prince Arthur, by marrying him to a princess of Spain, which country was now becoming very strong and important. A few months after the marriage, however, the prince, who was but sixteen years old, died. Henry, who wished to continue the alliance with Spain, and was also very unwilling to give back the princess's money, then obtained the Pope's dispensation, and married her to his next son, Henry, who was only twelve years old, while the wife who was forced upon him was six years older. He seems to have objected very strongly to the marriage, as was only natural. This match led to still more important consequences than that between Margaret and the King of Scotland, as we shall see.

16. Henry VII. had not much peace for some time after his succession. His own title to the crown not being very good, except so far as parliament had accepted him, there arose pretenders to it, who gave him a great deal of trouble. The first of these gave himself out for the young son of the Duke of Clarence, who was called Earl of Warwick, after his grandfather, the king-maker, and who was really shut up in prison all this time for no offence whatever except his birth. This pretender was really named Lambert Simnel, and was the son of a carpenter.

1487.

17. The second professed to be Richard, Duke of York, the poor young boy who, as there seems no reason to doubt, had been murdered in the Tower, but who was now said to

1496.

have escaped. Every one now believes that this "claimant" was one Perkin Warbeck, born at Tournay, in Flanders. But both the adventurers, and especially the last, found great allies and supporters. The old friends and relations of the House of York, and the nobility whom Henry was

humiliating, were ready enough to turn against him. Edward IV.'s sister, the Duchess of Burgundy, favoured them both, acknowledged them as her nephews, and gave them money and aid to invade England. The King of Scotland favoured Perkin, and married him to a relation of his own.

18. But in the end first one and then the other fell into Henry's power. Lambert Simnel he did not fear enough to be cruel to ; he gave him his pardon, and, from being a prince and Earl of Warwick, the poor foolish fellow was glad enough to be made a scullion in the king's kitchen. But Perkin, who was more dangerous, and had given a great deal more trouble, was imprisoned in the Tower, and a year or two after was put to death. The real Earl of Warwick, who had been drawn into joining his fellow-prisoner in an attempt to escape, was beheaded also ; Henry, perhaps, being glad of an excuse to get his only real rival out of the way, for this unfortunate young prince was the sole male descendant of the Plantagenets left. This execution was the only violent or cruel act of Henry's reign.

19. Not only was the rule of Henry VII. quietly serviceable to the country, but the time itself was a most interesting one. All sorts of wonderful things were being done or thought, which excited the minds of men, opened their eyes, and stirred their hopes. The dawn of the new day, which had been gradually rising, from the days of Wycliffe and Chaucer onward, had grown very bright now. The old times, which were almost worn out, were passing away, and new ones were beginning. This period at the close of the Wars of the Roses, as we have remarked, was the end of the middle ages, and the death of the feudal system.

The Renaissance.

20. But if it was the death of one order of things, it was the life and new birth of others, as is expressed by the very name which this period often bears—the Renaissance, the being born again. In some ways men now went back to very old times, which had been long buried and nearly forgotten, and, as it were, brought them to life again. And many quite new and wonderful things came to life now also, so that it was a time of great spirit and stir, full of eagerness, and anticipation, and wonder.

We shall first notice one or two of the quite new things which came into life, and then some of the quite old ones which were revived.

21. First, then, we may almost say the world itself grew larger, as if to make room for the great hopes and schemes of men, by

**Discovery
of America.**

the discovery of America. Hitherto only the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa had been known ; but now the two great Americas were added to the map of the world. At first, of course, only small parts were touched at and discovered ; but whatever was seen and gradually approached must have struck the imagination very forcibly. In America everything seems immense ; the mountains, the rivers, the lakes are all on a vast scale compared with any of those in Europe. As travellers saw more and more of these they must have been amazed. Then there were the wonderful vegetation : the infinite forests, the giant trees, the climbing plants, the flowers ; the strange animals, lovely humming-birds, and uncouth alligators ; and, again, the curious reddened men : some half savage, some civilized after a fashion of their own, with their religion, their temples, their arts, and history, and legends. In this region too there were great stores of gold, which has always had a fascination for the eyes of man. The alchemists, with all their toil, had never succeeded in making one of those pure shining grains ; but here it was in abundance. All this was very exciting and animating. It was really a new world opening. Never, in all our lives, can we know what it was to find oneself living on the brink of such a wonderland as America seemed for the first hundred years or more after its discovery.

22. It would have been a great pride and pleasure to have been able to say that England had the glory of discovering, or even helping to discover, this new world beyond the sea. It was almost by chance that she did not, as Christopher Columbus, who could not find any one to help him with money or ships, though he applied to Genoa, Portugal, and Spain, one after the other, at last sent his brother Bartholomew to England, to see if its king would help him. Henry VII., notwithstanding his love of money, was a very sagacious, sensible man, and was thought very highly of throughout Europe.

23. Unfortunately, the brother of Columbus in travelling to England fell among thieves, or pirates, who stripped him so far literally of his raiment, that when he at last got to London he was in such miserable plight as not to have even a decent coat in which he could venture to appear at court. Before doing anything else he was obliged to try and earn money ; and this he did by drawing and selling maps. (This in itself shows a kind of intellectual activity among the people ; had they not taken some interest in geography they would not have wanted Bartholo-

mew's maps.) At last he contrived to get access to the king, laid before him all his brother's schemes and ideas, and met with a favourable reception. Henry was quite sensible enough to see, what so few others could, how likely Columbus was to prove right.

24. Columbus, it should be remembered, did not expect to discover a new world at all, but only to get round that way to India, and this was how the islands at which he first arrived received the name of the "West Indies." People had long been convinced that the world was not, as the ancients had thought, flat like a plate, but round like a globe; and even two or three hundred years before this had had ideas that it might be possible to sail all round it, though no one had ever dared try to do so. They were, however, learning to take long voyages now. Some time before this the mariner's compass had been invented, by the help of which sailors might venture to cross the sea, instead of only keeping near the land, as the Greeks and Romans used to do.

25. Henry was favourably inclined to the scheme of Columbus, and though he hesitated before making up his mind, it is quite possible that, but for Bartholomew's long delay, he would have been the one to fit out the expedition, and send the discoverer on his way. But meanwhile Columbus himself, not hearing any news from his brother, had gained the favour of Queen Isabella of Castile, and it was she who had the honour of helping him to America.

26. Thus the discovery of the New World cannot be called part of the history of England; but a few years afterwards Henry did send out an expedition to the new continent, headed by Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian, who had
1498.
settled in England. He discovered many other parts of North America, and the island of Newfoundland; the very parts which are now filled with Englishmen. This we may call the first beginning of England's great colonial empire. Hitherto England had had no colonies, and so far had prospered well enough without them. The population was very small then compared to what it is now, and the land could maintain its people. Perhaps in all England there were about as many people as now live in London alone. But let us consider, as the population grew and multiplied, what would have become of us all, pent up between four seas, crowding and ever crowding, unless we could send forth our children to other lands beyond those seas. Now we have our thriving colonies in America, Africa, Australia, New

Zealand; great healthy children, far bigger than their mother; and, as was noticed before, our language is spoken more widely and universally than any other in the world. And of all this the seeds were sown in Henry VII.'s reign.

27. It was not very long after this that people began to understand more about the real system of the universe. We have seen what men believed in the middle ages about the earth, the sun, and the stars. The earth was fixed in the centre of all things, and the sun, and stars, and planets revolved around it,

each in its own sphere. But now an astronomer named Copernicus, a native of Prussia, began to understand that this was not so; that the earth was not fixed and immovable, and the centre of the universe, but a planet like Mars, and Venus, and the others, and that they all revolved around the sun, just as we now know to be true. This was another great discovery, and was the beginning of modern astronomy.

28. In some other things men really made great progress by going back. One of these was learning, the other was religion.

We know that, long ages ago, and before Christ came, when the Germans, and French, and English were still wild savages, there had been a wonderfully great and civilized nation living in Greece. Up to this hour we still

Revival of learning. feel that the Greeks in many ways were far higher than ourselves. They had great poets, whose works we love to read, and the greatest of modern Englishmen still try to translate them. Two very eminent statesmen have both made translations of Homer quite lately; besides some of our fine poets of former days, Chapman, Pope, and Cowper. Others of the Greek poets wrote grand plays, both tragedies and comedies.

29. Again, they had philosophers, who still seem to us wiser than any one but Christ, and the prophets, and apostles. They had historians who wrote the most delightful and interesting histories. They had artists who could carve and sculpture marble more wonderfully than any one can do now, and from whom all modern artists learn lessons of beauty and grace. And they had architects who built magnificent temples, such as most modern architects have tried to imitate.

30. Besides all this, the New Testament, as we know, was in Greek. But for many centuries nobody had been able to read all those wonderful books—the poetry, or the history, or the philosophy. Nobody knew Greek; only learned men knew Latin; and the Latin had become very bad and absurd. Mediæval

Latin is most unlike real good Latin. The clergy looked on Greek as a wicked and heathenish language; all they knew of the Bible was from a very imperfect translation into Latin called the Vulgate; all they knew of the philosophers, of Plato and Aristotle, was from some translations made by the Arabs into Arabic, and out of Arabic translated again into Latin, with notes added which often quite altered the sense.

31. But just now a great disaster befell Europe which (as so frequently happens) brought some good after it. This was the taking of Constantinople by the Turks. For after all the Crusades which had been fought to drive the Mahometans even out of Palestine, the end had been that they had come steadily forward, had passed from Asia into Europe, taken possession of Turkey and Hungary, and established their capital at Constantinople, the city of Constantine, the first **1453.** Christian emperor. The good that came out of this evil was, that numbers of learned Greeks, being driven from their homes, came into Italy, and especially to Florence, where the people were already very fond of literature and art, and taught them Greek.

32. Now the Italians began to read all those wonderful books which had been hidden away so long, and to take intense pleasure and delight in them. They began too to leave off the miserable mediæval Latin of the monks, and to read the best books which the Romans had written in old days. And we may imagine how busy the new printing-presses were, which seemed to have been invented just at the right moment to help the busy, happy scholars. The great Latin poet Virgil was printed in 1470, and the Greek Homer in 1488.

This was called the Renaissance, or New Birth of learning. Some of the wisest and best of the scholars of England, hearing of its fame, travelled to Italy to get their share; to learn Latin and Greek, and to bring them back to England.

LECTURE XL. THE STATE OF RELIGION.

Worldliness of the Church. The monasteries. The Oxford reformers. The New Testament. Henry VIII. and Dean Colet.

1. AMONG all the changes of this period, the most important for England was that which soon took place in religion. We have not heard much about that lately, because all seemed going on as before. There were still some Lollards, who, as we know, were a sort of Protestants, and every now and then some were cruelly put to death, and some were persuaded to deny their faith and recant; but they were quite obscure, and not much noticed except to be put down. The Roman Church, meanwhile, had been going on from bad to worse.

2. All observing and sensible men knew that the clergy, instead of being more honest and honourable than the rest of the world, were much less so. A very excellent clergyman, Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, of whom we shall hear more by and bye, gave a large sum of money to found a school, and, of course, wanted what we now call "trustees" to take care of it. But he would not appoint any clergyman, bishop, dean, or canon to this office; nor would he appoint any nobleman, but selected some married citizens of honest report. When he was asked his reason for this, he said that he found "less corruption in these men." This, at any rate, leads us to hope that the middle class of traders and citizens, which was so increasing in wealth and importance, was an upright and conscientious class, worthy of the name of Englishmen.

3. The Pope at this time was Alexander VI., whose family name was "Borgia;" he was perhaps the most wicked Pope that ever existed, which is saying a good deal. The Italians and everybody else were utterly horrified at his crimes. An Italian historian, writing of him after his death (by poison which he had intended for some one else), calls him "the extinct serpent, who by his immoderate ambition, pestifer

1492.

ous perfidy, monstrous lust, and every sort of horrible cruelty and unexampled avarice had compassed the destruction of so many persons." The next Pope, Julius II., was a great fighter, more like a soldier than a priest. 1503.

4. The higher clergy, the cardinals, bishops, and abbots, were for the most part occupied in worldly affairs, in trying to gain the favour of the king, or in increasing their own splendour and luxury. We shall soon come to a typical example of this sort of churchman in Cardinal Wolsey, who was one of the most eminent persons in the next reign.

5. The lower clergy naturally followed their example in a smaller way, and the power and influence they had over the laity they used greatly as a means to get money out of them. It is almost incredible how many and how shameless were their ways of doing this, by working at once on the religious fears and the sinful dispositions of their flocks. It does not appear that many of the people had any great aspirations after goodness, or spiritual and moral improvement; that had all been crushed with the Lollards; nor did the priests strive to raise any such aspirations in them. All that most men cared for was to escape any dreadful punishment in hell or purgatory, and yet not have to be inconveniently pious or self-denying in this world. This paltry, mean, degrading sort of religion suited the ideas of the clergy very well. They were supposed to hold the keys of the next world; if a man confessed to his priest, and was absolved, then he felt quite safe. When he had done anything wrong, therefore, he went and confessed it; he would then be ordered some penance before he could be absolved; but if he did not like the penance he might pay money instead, and would be absolved just the same. This was very convenient to a rich man, who escaped his punishment, and very pleasant to the priest, who received the money; whether it ennobled or purified the soul of either let any honest person judge.

Confession
and
penance.

6. Again, the Church forbade eating meat on fast days, but rich people who did not like fish might get dispensations from fasting by paying for them. The Church forbade relations, even rather distant cousins, to marry one another, but if they were rich they would easily get permission to marry if they liked, as Richard III. expected to be allowed to marry his own niece.

Dispensa-
tions.

7. Then there were the bishops' courts, which had been founded long ago for the improvement of morality, and in

which the Church could take notice of offences which were not punished by the law of the land.

The bishops' courts.

In old times these courts had done good ; for instance, they often punished a man for cruelty to his slaves ; but now they too had become a ready means for getting money. If a man in a moment of passion or heat spoke a disrespectful word about his priest, he might be called before the court and fined ; if he would not pay the fine he might be excommunicated, and we know what a dreadful punishment that was. When an unfortunate man was excommunicated, no friend might show him kindness, or even speak to him ; no tradesman might sell him food or clothes ; and if he died he was refused the last sacraments, and the burial of a Christian. Of course, then, people would be very slow to offend the clergy, and would rather pay almost anything to keep on good terms with them.

8. Another ingenious way of raising money was to send people on pilgrimages, as, for example, to Becket's shrine, or to **Pilgrimages.** a holy well or some miraculous image, to get forgiveness for their sins. But every one knew that it was of no use to go empty-handed. "The rule of the Church," says Froude, "was, Nothing for nothing." At a chapel in Saxony there was an image of a Virgin and child. If the worshipper came to it with a good handsome offering the child bowed and was gracious ; if the present was unsatisfactory it turned away its head and withheld its favours till the purse-strings were untied again.

"There was a great rood or crucifix of the same kind at Boxley in Kent, where the pilgrims went in thousands. This figure used to bow, too, when it was pleased, and a good sum of money was sure to secure its good will. When the Reformation came, and the police looked into the matter, the images were found to be worked with wires and pulleys." The crucifix from Boxley was brought up to London, and exhibited in Cheapside, where it was torn to pieces by the people.

9. But the greatest and most successful way of all was by the doctrine of purgatory, which, as is well known, was a sort of intermediate place between heaven and hell, where **Purgatory.** those who were not bad enough to be punished for ever in hell, and yet not good enough to go straight to heaven, were purged and purified by terrible punishments lasting through many thousands of years. The mediæval writers gave most horrifying descriptions of purgatory. Dante, the great Italian poet, indeed drew a wide distinction between it and hell, though even he

said the souls there were chastised with blindness, fire, and smoke ; but the English monks and old historians could hardly say enough about the tortures they endured. One of the monks who dreamt or believed that he saw a vision of purgatory in the days of Richard I., spoke of it as being filled with malicious demons, who tormented the miserable souls with every conceivable cruelty. Some were suspended over fires of brimstone by iron chains ; fiery dragons sat upon some of them and gnawed them with iron teeth ; some were baked in ovens and fried in frying-pans ; some were immersed in caldrons of boiling pitch. All this and a very great deal more was fully believed in by the people.

There was a very famous cave in Ireland called St. Patrick's Hole, in which it was said that a view of purgatory might be obtained. Froissart fell in with a knight who, with a friend of his, had entered this cave. "I asked him," he writes, "if there were any foundation in truth for what was said of St. Patrick's Hole. He replied that there was, and that he and another knight had been there. They entered it at sunset, remained there the whole night, and came out at sunrise the next morning." But when Froissart requested farther to be told whether he saw all the marvellous things which were to be seen there, he heard that the two knights were fast asleep the whole night ! But as they looked upon this as a supernatural sleep, and "imagined that they saw more in their dreams than they would have done if they had been in their beds," their faith was not at all shaken.

10. It was supposed that no one but a great saint went at once to heaven after death ; but no baptized person, unless excommunicated, perished for ever ; so that almost every one went to purgatory ; and a priest could release him only by saying a certain number of masses, which were paid for at so much a dozen. The same monk who described his vision of purgatory so minutely, expressly mentioned that there was a very great difference among those who were tortured in this place ; those who had not been very wicked passed through it easily, and so also did those "who were assisted by the masses of their friends."

Who then could refuse money to release his dearest friend or relation from years of misery ? Purgatory was afterwards not unfitly called by Bishop Latimer "Purgatory Pickpurse."

11. In the granting of all these pardons or "indulgences" it is quite true that the Church made some kind of distinction between the spiritual and temporal (or, as it were, bodily) penances. But scarcely anybody could understand what this distinction meant. According to the plain and common meaning

of the words in which they were sold, they were a "broad, plain, direct guarantee from the pains of purgatory, from hell itself, for tens, hundreds, thousands of years; a sweeping pardon for all sins committed; a sweeping licence for sins to be committed."*

12. As for the monasteries which had been founded as homes of a special holiness and purity, they too had many of them changed sorely for the worse. So bad indeed had **Monasteries.** some become, that even the Pope and the archbishop every now and then felt obliged to take some notice. For example, there was a famous abbey at St. Alban's, the fine old church of which has lately been made a cathedral with a bishop, but which, in the days of Henry VII., was still a very rich monastery with monks and an abbot.

13. Both the abbot and the monks were so scandalously wicked that even the Pope heard of it. This was not that Pope Alexander VI., who was himself more wicked still, but his predecessor Innocent VIII. He heard that they had neglected all the good old customs for which those places were in great measure founded—religious meditation, almsgiving, and hospitality; they had not only wasted the revenues and destroyed the property, but had stolen the sacred vessels, the chalices and jewels, from the church, and even the precious stones from the very shrine of the martyr Alban. Besides their avarice and robbery, they lived most shameful and wicked lives; and if any of the brethren tried to be wise and virtuous, religious and just, those the abbot hated and kept down.

14. The Pope commissioned Cardinal Morton to make inquiries about these charges, and to correct and reform as might seem good to him. On inquiry Morton found all

1489. the charges to be true; there seems to have been hardly any attempt at denying them. It might have been expected, therefore, that this shameless and wicked abbot would be deposed, and the monks also severely punished. But though Morton did certainly write a strong letter of reproof, still he took no other measures whatever, only inviting the abbot to consider his ways, and amend them if possible.

15. This, it is to be feared, is only a sample of what many of the monasteries were, and especially the smaller ones; and we can judge that if things were come to such a condition, and this was all the Pope or the archbishop could or would do in the way of reform, somebody else would be likely to take up the matter before long. When things in this world become intolerably

* Milman.

bad there is always the consolation of knowing that their end must be near, and that in some way or other human nature will shake itself free of them.

16. The religion of the Roman Church had now become so degraded that it could no longer be put up with, and it taught so many foolish and unreasonable things that only the most ignorant people could believe in them.

Religion and
the new
learning.

And now in this time of the Renaissance, what with the invention of printing, the spread of books and of reading, the study of the old Latin and Greek philosophers, the ages of ignorance were passing away. In Italy, where the Renaissance first began, where people were quick and gay, and where they also knew more about the Popes and their religion than anybody else, some of the new scholars, in casting away the evils and corruptions of Christianity, cast away Christianity itself. They were so delighted with the writings of the old poets and sages of heathen times

In Italy.

that they turned half heathens themselves. The painters, who up till now had almost always painted sacred things, scenes out of the Bible, or the lives of saints, Madonnas in glory, or the vision of the unseen world, began to paint pictures of Bacchus, and Venus, and Cupid. They seem to have half believed in Christianity and half in paganism, or not to have believed really in either, but only amused themselves with both. And in this way the Renaissance, being separated from religion, wrought a very sad change.

17. But in England it was quite different. The scholars who took up with the new learning were also most religious and holy men. They were a great deal too wise not to see how corrupt, how disguised, and how spoiled Christianity had become, but they were also too wise not to see how noble and divine a thing true Christianity is. So, in trying to bring in what might seem to be new, these men really went back to the old. They endeavoured to throw aside the encumbrances which had been growing up for 1400 years, and to find out what Christianity was in the mind of Christ and the apostles. And this also they sought to teach to everybody else.

In England.

18. The principal of these early reformers were three men, two of whom, Colet and More, were Englishmen, while the third, Erasmus, was a Dutchman; and as, for a time, they all worked together at Oxford, they are often called the Oxford Reformers. They all saw as plainly as we do, or rather far more plainly, as they were in the midst of it, the evil condition of religion. They

knew how covetous the clergy were, and how bad the monasteries were (Erasmus indeed had been a monk himself for a time).

They saw how foolish some things were which used to be thought very sacred. Colet and Erasmus went together on a pilgrimage to Canterbury, and this is the last which we shall have to hear of the many Canterbury pilgrimages.

19. Erasmus, who was very clever and witty, wrote the account of their visit to the shrine; that splendid shrine of Becket, with its rich gildings and jewels, where, as it was believed, so many miracles had been worked, and which had been regarded with so much veneration by kings and warriors, and by all the people of the land.

20. But now these two pilgrims, religious as they both were, looked on in a very different spirit. Erasmus was amused; Colet was indignapt. When they beheld the magnificent treasures which the verger showed them with much pride, and "before which Croesus himself might have seemed a beggar," Erasmus says he could not help feeling regret, "sacrilegious regret, for which he begged pardon of the saint before he left the church, that none of those gifts adorned his own homely mansion." Colet remarked that he would have supposed St. Thomas would far rather have seen some of these vast treasures given to the poor. The verger began to grow angry, and had half a mind to turn them out of the church. When they were shown the stores of bones, and skulls, and dirty rags, which were guarded and revered as priceless relics, Colet would not kiss any of them, and indeed showed so much contempt and impatience that Erasmus felt quite ashamed of his friend's bad manners. But when an old man brought them with great ceremony the upper leather of a shoe to kiss, saying it was St. Thomas's shoe, Colet's anger broke all bounds. "What!" he said, "do these asses expect us to kiss the old shoes of all good men who have ever lived?" and rode away in much disgust.

21. Thus, it is evident, times were changing. What Colet and Erasmus wanted was a quiet reformation, and not a great revolution such as really took place. They longed for every one to read and understand the Bible, which had been so long forbidden, and took all possible pains to spread it.

The Bible. Hitherto not only were the laity debarred from reading the Bible at all, but the clergy themselves had not tried to find out or to teach its real meaning, according to the natural sense of the words, but had put into it all sorts of curious and

fanciful meanings of their own. But now Colet, reading it first in its own original Greek, instead of in the Latin translation, taught and explained it simply and naturally in lectures and in sermons, especially the Gospels, and the Epistles of St. Paul.

22. Erasmus published a new and corrected edition of the New Testament, which was printed in thousands and spread all over Europe. He said he should wish every one, "even the weakest woman, to read the gospel. I wish they should be translated into all languages, so that they might be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but even by Turks and Saracens." At that time the Scotch and Irish were far behind the English in learning and civilization, and we know what was thought of Turks and Saracens. "I long," he goes on, "that the husbandman should sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of his journey."

23. Colet, who after living a long time at Oxford was made Dean of St. Paul's, and who was a rich man, spent nearly all his money in founding a school where boys should be taught good Latin and Greek, and above all true religion and the love of Christ. It was he who chose his trustees among "the married citizens of good report;" and St. Paul's School, the one which he founded, is still one of our most famous public schools. Other good and rich men followed his example, and founded grammar schools in all parts of England, many of which are still doing their good work.

24. These men did not wish for a separation; they rather hoped that the whole Christian Church might remain united, by all of it, up to the highest clergy and the Popes, peacefully but thoroughly reforming and purifying itself. Their hope was not realized, beautiful as it was. The Popes and the high authorities would not reform; no gentle means would avail. A great deal of roughness and violence, a great many meaner and more worldly motives, had to come in and take part. And after all the Christian world was torn asunder, and only a portion of it accepted the Reformation. Still even the countries which continued attached to the Papal Church altered in some ways, and the religion of educated people in those countries now is very different from the superstition and ignorant credulity of the middle ages. Nor are the clergy of that Church any longer worldly and avaricious, like those we have been hearing of.

25. Happily for herself, England was one of the countries

which heartily embraced the Protestant Reformation, but this was hardly begun as yet. In the midst of the work

1509.
Henry VIII. of the Oxford Reformers Henry VII. died, and was succeeded by his son Henry VIII., who was now about eighteen years old. In his reign the work of the Reformation went on at a quicker pace, though not in such a lofty spirit.

26. The new Henry was a great contrast to his father, who had latterly grown tyrannical, and still more miserly than of old. He was gay, handsome, and clever, and at once became very popular. He was well-educated, fond of books and of clever men, fond of splendour and magnificence, fond of fame and glory, and fondest of all, like his father and all his family, of his own will. Just at first that did not seem to matter much, and a little wilfulness is easily forgiven to a fine young prince. One of the first things he did was to punish with death his father's instruments of tyranny, Empson and Dudley, which of course gave great satisfaction to the people. He soon wished to distinguish himself in war, and mixed himself up in foreign affairs for no particular reason apparently, except in hopes of winning fame. He went

1513. to France and took a few towns, and won a battle in which the French ran away so fast that it got the name of the "Battle of the Spurs."

27. Now the Oxford Reformers, beside their views about religion, had also very decided opinions on politics, and one of the things they were most clearly convinced of was the wickedness of going to war except on the strongest grounds. They knew what dreadful misery it caused the people, and they held that no king or

**Colet's
sermon on
war.**

prince had a right to seek glory at such a cost. Just before Henry was going to start upon the French expedition, on a Good Friday, Dean Colet had to preach a sermon before him and the courtiers. He was a brave man, and showed himself to be so now. For whilst the king and all his followers were full of their ambitious ideas and hopes of glory, Colet took the opportunity of preaching a bold and outspoken sermon against war, exhorting them to fight under the banner of Christ, their heavenly King, and saying that "they who either through hatred, ambition, or covetousness do fight with evil men, and so kill one another, fight not under the banner of Christ, but the devil." It is Erasmus himself, Colet's dear friend, who tells the story. "And," he goes on, "he had so many other smart passages to this purpose, that his Majesty was somewhat afraid lest this sermon would dishearten his soldiers. Hereupon all the birds of prey flocked about Colet like

an owl, hoping the king would be incensed upon him." For, like all reformers, Colet had plenty of enemies, men who loved darkness rather than light. But now we shall see that at this time, at least, Henry was generous and candid, and knew a good man when he saw him. "His Majesty commands Colet to come before him at Greenwich. He goes into the garden of the monastery of the Franciscans, which was near, and presently dismisseth his attendants. When they two were alone the king bid Colet cover his head, and speak his mind freely; and then his Highness began thus: 'Dean, be not surprised with needless fear; I did not send for you hither to disturb your most holy labours (which I resolve to cherish as much as I can), but to unload my conscience of some scruples, and to desire your advice concerning my duty.' The conference lasted almost an hour and a half, and I must not relate it all. In the mean while Bricot (the Franciscan bishop) was in the court stark wild, hoping that Colet had been in great danger, whereas the king and he agreed in every particular very well. . . . When they returned from the garden to the court, the king, being about to dismiss Colet, called for a cup, and drank to him, embracing him most kindly, and promising him all the favours that could be expected from a most loving prince, dismissed him. And now the courtiers standing round the king expected to hear the issue of this long conference; and the king, in the hearing of them all, said, 'Well, let other men choose what doctors they please, and make much of them; this man shall be my doctor.' Whereupon Bricot, with the rest of the gaping wolves, departed, and from that day forward never dared trouble Colet any more."

28. Still it is to be feared that the effect of the sermon was rather like that of St. Anthony to the fishes.* Much the same too, may be said of the wise words of Sir Thomas More, the youngest of the Oxford Reformers, and perhaps the best beloved. It was he who wrote the lives of Edward V. and Richard III., of which we have already heard. He afterwards put his thoughts about government, and education, and social life into one of the most charming little books an Englishman ever wrote. All his ideas on those topics

Sir Thomas
More.

* "The sermon now ended,
To his business each wended;
The pikes to their thieving,
The eels to good living;
Much delighted were they,
But went on the old way."

were so different from the facts he saw about him that he was obliged to invent a country where they could be realized. In that country war was detested ; pomp and luxury were despised ; gold and silver were used to make chains and fetters for criminals ; pearls and diamonds were the toys and ornaments of children. But the things which really make life happy were shared in abundance by all. Every one had a pleasant house and a beautiful garden ; every one knew how to read and write, and had leisure to do so. No one was allowed to work too hard ; no one was allowed to be idle ; no one quarrelled about his religion, nor was any one punished on account of it. The rulers ruled for the sake of the people, to make them wise, safe, and happy, and not for any pride or profit of their own.

This land was a distant island far away in the southern seas. It was called Utopia, or "the Land of Nowhere." Perhaps if More could revisit the earth and his old home now, he might think we are still a long way off from "Utopia."

LECTURE XLI.—THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

Cardinal Wolsey. His rise and greatness. Henry and Katherine. Fall of Wolsey. The Pope's supremacy renounced. The king declared head of the Church. Deaths of More and Fisher.

1. WHILE Henry was in France, winning a few easy victories which did no good whatever to the country, the Scotch as usual took the opportunity of quarrelling with England, and the great battle of Flodden Field was fought, in which the English wiped away the disgrace of Bannockburn by entirely defeating the Scotch, and of which we can read an animated account in 'Marmion.' In this battle the Scotch king and many of the highest nobles of the land were killed.

1513.
Battle of
Flodden
Field.

2. Some time after this England and France made peace, and the two kings met. There was a fine young King of France now, as well as of England, and their interview was of a very different kind from that of Edward IV. and the French king through the gratings on the bridge. This royal meeting was so grand and splendid that it was called the "Field of the Cloth of Gold." There were fine tournaments, and shows of all sorts, plenty of compliments and embraces, and the two young kings called each other brothers. But no great good came of it at all, for in another year or two the two sworn brothers went to war again.

1519.

3. We must now hear a little about the man who arranged this, and who guided and advised the king in all matters, great and small. This was the man before referred to as the very type of a clever, proud, and worldly churchman, Cardinal Wolsey. We have often observed already how a man even of the very lowest class, if he had talents and capabilities, might rise to the highest rank in the Church, so as to be equal and even superior to kings and emperors. Wolsey was one who rose thus. The man who wrote his life, of which we shall read a few extracts, was a gentleman in his service;

Wolsey.

for in those days great lords and bishops had many gentlemen in their households who were proud to be called their servants. Cavendish tells us that his master was "an honest poor man's sonne of Ipswich;" he is apparently too delicate to say that, in fact, he was the son of a butcher.

4. The child proving to be richly gifted, he received an excellent education, and went very young to Oxford, where he did so well that he took his degree at fifteen years old, and was called all through the university the

His rise. Boy Bachelor. After that by his talents and industry he got on in the world very fast, and by and bye came to be chaplain to Henry VII., and was much noticed by some of the counsellors. But the way he first gained the king's favour was rather curious. Henry had to send a message to the Emperor Maximilian, who was at that time in Flanders; and his counsellors recommended as messenger this chaplain Wolsey, whom it does not seem the king had ever noticed before. The king conversed with him, "perceived his wit to be very fine," and gave him his instructions. We can now get from London to Brussels in ten hours by the help of trains and steamboats; but in those days it was quite a long and difficult journey. Most of it had to be done on horseback, with relays of post-horses; and there was generally a good deal of waiting here, and waiting there, waiting for horses, waiting for the boat, and so on. But Wolsey made such haste and such excellent arrangements that he waited nowhere. He travelled night and day, caught the Calais boat at the right moment, saw the emperor, arranged the business, and came back again. All this he did so quickly that, supposing he left the king at Richmond on Monday at twelve o'clock, he came back again by Thursday night, and saw the king on Friday morning just as he came out of his bed-room.

5. The king, never guessing how busy he had been, "checked" or rebuked him "for that he was not on his journey;" and when he found that he had already been and come back again, "he rejoiced inwardly not a little, and gave him princely thanks." This was the beginning of Wolsey's high favour in the king's esteem. He had shown such zeal and industry, "such excellent wit," and had managed the whole affair so well, that he was straightway made Dean of Lincoln, and from that time continually rose higher and higher. When Henry VIII. became king he at once made Wolsey one of his chief counsellors. Henry loved his own will and his own way, but at the same time, being still young, he loved pleasure better than business. Wolsey soon

perceived that the best manner in which he could hope to rise as high as he intended would be by helping the king to indulge those tastes. All he aimed at was "to advance the king's only will and pleasure, having no respect unto the cause."

6. Nothing could have answered better, as far as those two were concerned. Wolsey was quite willing to work ; no trouble was too great for him ; he did all the king wanted, took all the labour on himself, and so let the king have leisure to amuse himself, and yet get everything done as he wished. Thus Wolsey got enormous power into his own hands ; he was at the head of all the affairs of the country ; he had charge of the royal treasury, and, being Lord Chancellor, he was the highest judge in the kingdom. He was also supreme in the Church, and had all the bishops, abbots, and clergy under his control. With all this he still only worked as the king's servant, and to carry out his will. He received in return enormous rewards, pensions, bishoprics, and all sorts of wealth. He was not only Lord Chancellor, but Archbishop of York, and a cardinal. He hoped to be Pope by and bye ; nothing seemed too great for him to aim at.

**He becomes
chancellor,
archbishop,
and car-
dinal.**

7. He now lived in wonderful style. In his household, attending on him, and holding various offices, were a good number of lords and gentlemen to begin with ; under them innumerable servants of all degrees, clerks of the kitchen, yeomen of the scullery, yeomen of his chariot and his stirrup, cupbearers, carvers, and grooms. His head cook "went daily in velvet or in satin, with a chain of gold." He had doctors, and chaplains, and choristers innumerable, filling two or three large pages of Cavendish's book. When he went out in the morning his cardinal's hat was borne before him "by a lord or some gentleman of worship right solemnly ;" also two great crosses. "Then cried the gentlemen ushers, going before him bareheaded, and said, 'On before, my lords and masters, on before, and make way for my Lord Cardinal.' Thus went he down through the hall, with a serjeant-of-arms before him bearing a great mace of silver, and two gentlemen carrying two great pillars of silver ; and when he came to the hall door, then his mule stood all trapped in crimson velvet, with a saddle of the same, and gilt stirrups. Then was there attending upon him when he was mounted his two cross-bearers, and his pillar-bearers, in like case, upon great horses trapped all in fine scarlet. Then marched he forward with a train of noblemen and gentlemen, having his footmen, four in number, about him, bearing each of them a gilt

**His lord-
liness.**

pole-axe in their hands, and thus passed he forth until he came to Westminster Hall door." With all this finery and display, it is satisfactory to know that "there he spared neither high nor low, but judged every estate according to his merits and deserts." Nor did he forget his old home, nor his old university; nor the good education which had helped him to rise so high. With a true generosity, he wished to give other men the same opportunities, and he founded a good school at Ipswich, and a splendid college at Oxford, which was at first called Cardinal College; but the name was afterwards changed to Christ Church, and that grand building with its magnificent staircase speaks to us still of Wolsey's lordly spirit.

8. His houses were splendid palaces, fit for a king's abode. One of them was Hampton Court, the other was at Whitehall. They were filled with magnificent furniture, costly hangings, beds of silk (Cavendish says there were 280 beds at Hampton Court), rich arras and tapestry work, gold and silver plate in profusion. We cannot help wondering whether, now that people had begun to read the New Testament, they ever contrasted all this with Peter the fisherman, or Paul the tent-maker, or the Master of them all, carrying His cross.

9. But it was too grand to last. In the Roman Catholic Church, in the midst of their most splendid ceremonies, which are more gorgeous than any one can conceive who has not seen them, sometimes on special occasions they have a very significant custom; it is as if a thought of mortality, a cold wind of warning, blows through their souls. When a Pope is being crowned, at that proudest hour of his life, or at some other grand solemnity, when the beautiful cathedral is hung with rich silk, golden lamps glittering everywhere, the air filled with music and incense, the bishops and archbishops in sumptuous apparel, you may see hanging in the midst of the church an iron cresset with a quantity of flax twisted round it. At one point in the service this is set alight, while the choristers sing "*Sic transit gloria mundi*." * It blazes up, oh, so brightly, for a moment, and then it is gone. Had Wolsey ever seen this ceremony? or ever thought of it? "*Sic transit gloria mundi*." The time was drawing near when his glory would pass away, and the glory of his Church too.

10. It was during Henry VIII.'s reign that the Reformation in Germany began under Martin Luther. Though we cannot

* So passes away the glory of the world.

give our attention to that, we must suppose that Luther's writings, his bold words and deeds, had a great effect on men's minds in England. The king took much interest in these matters, and though he liked Colet, he was still decidedly in favour of the Pope, and against Luther. He even wrote a book on the subject, which pleased the Pope so much that he gave him the title of Defensor Fidei, Defender of the Faith; which our kings and queens have borne ever since, though, as most of them have been Protestants, the Pope would probably consider that they have no great right to it.

11. But after a time Henry began to alter his views about the Pope, and it was then that meaner and lower motives came into play, and helped to bring the Reformation into England. Henry had been married, while still a boy, to Katherine of Aragon, the young widow of his brother Arthur. It is not likely that he ever loved her much, she being forced upon him in his childhood, and being some years older than himself. But she was a good woman; gentle, patient, pure, and queenly; no one could ever breathe a word against her. Henry and she had many children, but only one, a daughter, lived; the rest all died at once. Henry, who very much wished for a son, began to think, or said he thought, that his losing all his children was a mark of God's anger against the marriage, she being his brother's widow.

Wolsey at first favoured this idea from motives of policy. He wished the king to be at peace with France instead of with Spain, and he thought if Henry separated from his Spanish wife he might marry a French one, which would help on his projects. He little foresaw how matters would turn out.

12. It was no very easy thing to get rid of Queen Katherine. Henry had now been king more than twenty years, and she had been his acknowledged and blameless wife all that time. Everybody knew that the former Pope had given a dispensation to permit the marriage. Henry could not be divorced unless the present Pope allowed it. The Pope did not know what to do. He did not want to offend Henry, who had written a book in his favour, and was so rich and great a king. But neither did he want to offend Katherine's relations, especially her nephew, Charles V., who besides being King of Spain, was Emperor of Germany, and the most powerful sovereign in the world, and who had also taken his part against Luther. Whether he ever thought at all of what would

Henry VIII.
and the
Reformation.

Queen
Katherine.

The Pope's
dilemma.

be the right and just thing, instead of the prudent thing, we do not hear.

13. He would say nothing definite, and Henry grew very impatient. For besides his religious and conscientious scruples, such as they were, he had just now fallen in love with another lady, whom he was determined to marry, and this made him more than ever bent on being freed from Katherine. But when Wolsey found that instead of marrying the French princess, the

Anne
Boleyn.

king intended, to marry Anne Boleyn, who, it appears, was a charming and attractive girl, though not a very good or high-minded one, he changed his mind, and ceased to wish for the divorce which he had advocated before, and Anne Boleyn thereupon became his mortal enemy. He had hoped in the onset to please his own king and the King of France; but, as Fuller says, "instead of gaining the love of two kings, he got the implacable anger of two queens."

14. Wolsey accordingly fell into deep disgrace, and was stripped of all his great pomp and power. The pretext for

1529.
Wolsey's
disgrace.

doing this was a very mean one, namely, that he had acted as the Pope's legate without the special permission of the king. This, it is quite true, was an offence against the law of the land; as one of the many ways in which the kings of England had tried to maintain their own power, and keep down that of the Pope, had been by the law passed in the days of Richard II., called the Statute of Præmunire, which forbade any one to introduce bulls or to exercise authority for the Pope or any foreigner in England.

15. But as Wolsey had all along been acting in concert with the king, and nothing had ever been said about this statute, it was very unworthy to turn round and use it against him now that he was out of favour. However, so it was, and Wolsey submitted without any resistance. All his riches, all the gold and silver plate which had figured so gloriously on his sideboards, all the cloth of gold, cloth of silver, velvet, satin, damask, tufted taffeta, which delighted the soul of his servant Cavendish, were given up to the king. So were his palaces at Whitehall and at Hampton Court. Then he had to break up his great household, and a sad parting took place between him and his servants. He had always been a kind and generous master; and when he had to say farewell, Cavendish tells us that, "beholding this goodly number of his servants, he could not speak unto them, until the tears ran down his cheeks, which few tears, perceived by his servants, caused the fountains of water to gush out of their

faithful eyes in such sort as it would cause a cruel heart to lament."

16. Soon after this he was sent into what he doubtless looked upon as banishment, namely, to his archbishopric of York. "His enemies," says Fuller, "got the king to command him away to York, sending him thither whither his conscience long since should have sent him, namely, to visit his diocese, so large in extent, and reside therein." Sir Thomas More was made Lord Chancellor in his stead.

17. While in his comparative retirement in the north Wolsey seems to have acted very worthily, and really to have given his attention to the affairs of his diocese. He was not left there long, however; he was charged with high treason, and summoned to London. But he never saw London again. His proud heart was broken. When he got as far as Leicester Abbey he was so ill that he could hardly sit upon his mule. The abbot and all the convent received him with great reverence, but he said, "Father Abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you." And as he lay dying, and perhaps looked back **His death.**

over his strange life, beginning at the time when he was a little schoolboy and a poor man's son, through all his ambition and his industry, and power and splendour, he said, "If I had served God as diligently as I have served the king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs."

18. Meanwhile, the affair of the king's divorce from Queen Katherine was dragging wearily on. She behaved with a queenly and a womanly spirit; nothing would induce her to give in, or to own herself anything but Henry's lawful wife. The Pope delayed, hung back, played fast and loose as before. He wished with all his heart somebody would decide the matter without referring it to him at all. He declared that he was not learned in the law, and said, in a kind of humorous despair, that though there was a saying that the Pope has all laws locked within his own breast, yet, for his part, God had never given him the key to open that lock. Such being the case, we may imagine the great respect which would be felt for him. An ambassador of Henry's, at one time, writing to his master to tell him something the Pope had said, added that on the very day of the conversation he had received the blessed sacrament, which, perhaps, made it likely that he was speaking the truth.

19. At last, after delaying and doubting for seven years,

1533.
The king
marries
Anne
Boleyn.

Henry cut the knot. He privately married Anne Boleyn, having induced the Archbishop of Canterbury and some other English bishops to declare the former marriage void, without leaving it in the Pope's hands any longer.

20. But they went much farther than that, for now the king and his parliament, lords, bishops, and commons, declared that the Pope should have no more authority at all in England, and that the King of England was supreme head both of Church and State. Thus the long, long quarrel, which had been going on at intervals ever since the days of William the Conqueror, was settled at last, and England and her king were free from the rule of the foreigner, which had pressed so hard on their spirits.

He is
declared
head of
the Church.

21. This was still, at first, only a *political* Reformation; it was only a question of power and authority, not of religion or faith. Henry still meant to be "Defender of the Faith," and to maintain all the doctrines of the Church, of which he would be a sort of island Pope. And as by this time a great many people held other doctrines, such as Colet and Erasmus had taught, and such as Luther was teaching, he and his parliament were very severe in punishing heretics. Wolsey, in his day of power, had been averse to cruelty, and liked better to frighten the heretics, by making them carry faggots, which were burnt, than to burn the men themselves. But after his disgrace several famous men were put to death; and it is very sad to have to own that one of the persecutors was Sir Thomas More, who had begun by being almost a Protestant himself, and who had been so liberal and gentle in former days. But he had been shocked by Luther's boldness and defiant spirit, and so, indeed, had Erasmus also. They had both wished for a gradual reform; and Sir Thomas More now turned against those whom one would have thought he would have sympathized with and protected, and, like Saul, he consented unto their death. But when his own turn came he too was ready to give up his life for the sake of his conscience.

22. We are now coming to a time when half our history is filled up with the deaths of those who suffered for their faith. It was a very different thing then from what it is now to believe, or to say we believe, a thing. In our days, as long as a man does no harm to other people, he may believe just what he likes, and perhaps a great many are not quite sure what

they do believe ; but in those days men cared very much for their faith. They knew exactly what they believed, they were sure it was true, and they loved it passionately ; and they knew also what they disbelieved, they were sure it was a lie, and they hated it as passionately. They were ready to lay down their lives sooner than their faith.

23. After the invention of printing and the translation of the Bible (of which we are about to hear) everybody began to study theology. Hitherto people had had to be content with hearing only what the priests chose to tell them, and we have seen how the Church had set itself against laymen reading the Scriptures for themselves. But it was too late for that now ; and when the Bible was spread abroad, and every one had it in his own hands, he could not but begin to think for himself, and to compare what he read with what he heard. In other words, he could not help exercising "private judgment." And many men, having once made up their minds, were ready and willing to give their bodies to be burned.

24. We who are Protestants are justly proud of our Protestant martyrs, and of their noble lives and deaths ; but it would not be right to forget that there were good and true men on the other side too, who honestly thought they were right, and who also died nobly. One such was Sir Thomas More ; another was Fisher, Bishop of Rochester. They still held that the Pope was the head of the Church, and both were beheaded for denying the king's supremacy. Fisher, who was the old friend of Erasmus and More, was a great contrast to those splendid and pompous prelates, who had wandered so far from primitive Christianity. He was good, grave, and unworldly, "honoured for his learning, and admired for his holy conversation." While he was still in the king's favour, it had been proposed to promote him from his bishopric of Rochester to a much richer one, either Ely or Lincoln, but he refused the offer. Fuller tells us he was used to say "he would not change his little old wife to whom he had been so long wedded for a wealthier." It was said that when he fell into disgrace some soldiers, "coming to seize on his supposed wealth, found (what was quickly told) nothing at all belonging to him save a great barred chest. These, from the facing of iron, concluded the lining thereof silver at least ; and having broken it open, found therein nothing but sackcloth and a whip, which put them all to penance, and soundly lashed their covetous expectation."

1535.
Deaths of
More and
Fisher.

25. Being charged with high treason for denying the king's supremacy, the aged bishop was committed to the Tower, and after a time beheaded. The story of his death is very beautifully told by Fuller, who was a hearty, even a vehement, Protestant, but yet could see what was good in those from whom he differed. When the lieutenant of the Tower came to awaken his prisoner, and to announce to him that he was to suffer death that morning, he received the news very quietly, and begged he might still have an hour or two's rest, as he had slept but ill that night. "Not," he said, "for any fear of death, but by reason of my great infirmity and weakness." Then "falling again to rest, he slept soundly two hours and more, and after he was awaked, called to his man to help him up; but first commanded him to take away his shirt of hair, which customably he wore, and to convey it privily out of the house, and instead thereof to lay him a clean white shirt, and all the best apparel he had, as cleanly brushed as might be. And as he was arraying himself, his man, seeing in him more curiosity and care for the fine and cleanly wearing of his apparel that day than was wont, demanded of him what this sudden change meant, saying that his lordship knew well enough that he must put off all again within two hours, and lose it. 'What of that?' said he. 'Dost not thou mark that this is our marriage day, and that it behoveth us therefore to use more cleanliness for solemnity thereof?' . . . And with that, taking a little book in his hand, which was a New Testament, lying by him, he made a cross on his forehead, and went out of his prison door with the lieutenant, being so weak as that he was scant able to go down the stairs; wherefore, at the stair's foot he was taken up in a chair between two of the lieutenant's men, and carried to the Tower gate. . . . And as they were coming to the uttermost precincts of the liberties of the Tower, they rested there with him a space, till such time as one was sent before to know in what readiness the sheriffs were to receive him; during which space he rose out of his chair, and standing on his feet, leaned his shoulder to the wall, and lifting his eyes toward heaven, he opened the little book in his hand and said, 'O Lord, this is the last time that ever I shall open this book; let some comfortable place now chance unto me, whereby I, Thy poor servant, may glorify Thee in this my last hour.' And with that, looking into the book, the first thing that came to his sight were these words (in Latin), 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the

earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.' And with that he shut the book together, and said, 'Here is even learning enough for me to my life's end.' . . . When he was come to the foot of the scaffold, they that carried him offered to help him up the stairs, but said he, 'Nay, masters, seeing I am come so far, let me alone, and ye shall see me shift for myself well enough;' and he went up the stairs, without any help, so lively that it was a marvel to them that before knew his debility and weakness. But as he was mounting the stairs the south-east sun shined very bright in his face, whereupon he said to himself these words, lifting up his hands, 'Ye shall look unto Him and be lightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed.'"

26. After saying to the assembled people that he was come to die for the faith of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, and praying for his king and his country, "he kneeled down and said certain prayers. . . . Then came the executioner, and bound a handkerchief about his eyes; and so the bishop, lifting his hands and heart to heaven, said a few prayers, which were not long, but fervent and devout; which being ended, he laid his head down over the midst of a little block, where the executioner, being ready with a sharp and heavy axe, cut asunder his slender neck at one blow."

27. Thus there was no longer any hope of a peaceful Reformation. Many and many another sainted head would fall, on either side, before Christians could learn how in this imperfect world they might dwell together in unity, each holding his own faith, and yet each loving his brother who held another.

LECTURE XLII.—THE REFORMERS.

Cranmer and Cromwell. The English Bible. Tyndale. The New Testament burnt at St. Paul's. The Bible published by authority. Dissolution of the monasteries. Death of Henry VIII.

1. AFTER the fall of Wolsey, the chief advisers and supporters of the king were two very remarkable men. One of these was

Cranmer. Cranmer, who had been made Archbishop of Canterbury on account of the help he had given and was ready to give to the king about his divorce. Long afterwards he was burned to death for his Protestant religion; but at this time, though he upheld the king's supremacy, he believed the Roman Catholic doctrines, and consented to the burning of heretics. It is not to be supposed that in those days people became thorough Protestants all at once; it was only by degrees they learnt to see that among the things they had been brought up to believe "some were untrue, some uncertain, some vain and superstitious," and we have no right to blame them for this. Cranmer was not a perfect man by any means; he was more worldly and less brave than most of the reformers; but he did lasting good to the Church and nation; it was he who sent forth into the whole land our English Bible, the book which lies nearer to the heart of Englishmen than any other, and our English Prayer-book, which is also very dear to many of us.

2. The other counsellor of the king was Thomas Cromwell, a man who had been in Wolsey's employ, and who came into

favour as the great cardinal declined. He was most faithful to his master in his fall, and did all he could to shield him from disgrace and injury, so that every one respected and admired his honesty and fidelity. But he was a very bad adviser for the king. Henry, as we know, loved his own will. Wolsey had said of him, "He is a prince of royal courage, and hath a princely heart, and rather than he will want or miss any part of his will or pleasure he will endanger the loss of the one half of his realm." This was rather a com-

plimentary style of speaking, and the "royal courage and princely heart" in common people would have perhaps been called stubbornness and self-will. "I assure you," Wolsey went on, "I have often kneeled before him for the space sometimes of three hours, to persuade him from his will and appetite, but I could never dissuade him therefrom. Therefore, Mr. Kingstone, I warn you, if it chance you hereafter to be of his privy council . . . be well assured and advised what ye put in his head, for ye shall never put it out again."

3. Cromwell was exactly the minister to please a king like this, for all his aim and object was to make the king and the king's will supreme in everything. He wanted the country to be governed, not, as of old, by a constitutional king, who had to consult his parliament, and conform himself to the laws of the land, but by an absolute king, who should be above and before all, even above the law. This was all the more dangerous now, because Henry had become the head of the Church as well as of the State, and therefore he had twice as much authority as any of his predecessors, and it would no longer be in the power of the archbishops and bishops to oppose his will. Cromwell introduced a law which one wonders could ever have been adopted in so just and equitable a country as England—that persons accused of high treason should not be allowed to be heard in their own defence. It is very remarkable that when after a time Cromwell's will clashed with the king's, and he fell into disfavour, he was the first to suffer under that law.

4. All these plans and views of Cromwell suited Henry and his successors very well; but they did not suit the English nation, and when the time came, 100 years later, that the king's will and the nation's will went different ways, there was a great crash, and the old English freedom was restored. But this did not happen yet; the gradual change which had begun under Edward IV. still went on, and the country became more and more dependent on the personal will of the king. The Tudors, with one exception, besides being obstinate, were wise; they could see what the nation would put up with, and what it would not, and they never came into collision with their people, because they had so true a perception of what their will really was.

5. In this great matter of the Church, though there were many who differed from the Protestant reformers, it seems that the main body of the people more or less sided with them, and were glad to throw off the tyranny of Rome. When Henry and Cranmer began, as they soon did, to cast away the Romish

doctrines also, and to encourage the reading of the Bible, the more intelligent classes still approved. Above all, the clever and serious-minded young men at the universities, who had read the Greek Testament of Erasmus, and his other writings, were sure to be much influenced by them. Some of these came to be very famous afterwards, and have left a glorious name behind them,

as the fathers of the English Church. One of the Tyndale. most notable was Tyndale, who, having read and heartily sympathized with what Erasmus wished about the Bible, determined to do his share towards bringing it to pass, by once more translating the Bible into English. The old translations, even Wycliffe's, had now become old-fashioned; for though but 150 years had passed since his time, the language had altered so much that probably it could not be easily understood. But language altered much faster then than it does now, because the printing of books, which are read by many people all over a country, fixes the meaning of words and their spelling to a great extent; so that though our English Bible, which is more than 300 years old, is somewhat antique, we can all understand it, and delight in its beauty and majesty. A great part of the Bible, as we now have it, is in the very English of Tyndale, and of his friend Miles Coverdale, who helped him.

6. We ought, therefore, to know a little about the life and work of a man to whom all who love their English Bibles owe so much. His biography, as well as that of many others of the reformers, may be read in Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs,' which has always been a very favourite book, and is indeed most interesting, quaint, and vivid, though he was not impartial enough to be thoroughly relied on. Tyndale was a very well-educated young man, having studied both at Oxford and Cambridge, when he went to be tutor in a gentleman's family in Gloucestershire. This gentleman, Sir John Welch, being a rich and hospitable man, was in the habit of entertaining at dinner all the dignified clergy, the abbots, deans, and archdeacons of the neighbourhood, and the young tutor would sit at table among them. Even quite in the country people were already thinking a great deal about the new doctrines which were coming in, and the talk was very often about Erasmus and Luther, and their works. Tyndale, being learned and clever, would join in the conversation, and sometimes put all the dignitaries to silence by his arguments and knowledge of the Scriptures. He happened once to be in company of a divine, "recounted," says Foxe, "for a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him he drave him

to that issue that the said great doctor burst out into these blasphemous words, 'We were better to be without God's laws than the Pope.' Master Tyndale, hearing this, full of godly zeal, and not bearing that blasphemous saying, replied again, and said, 'I defy the Pope and all his laws;' and farther added that if God spared him life, ere many years he would cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scripture than he did."

7. Thus he soon grew into great disfavour with the clergy round, who wished things to stay as they were; and not only with these higher ones, but also with the lower and more ignorant, who were perhaps jealous of his learning. These latter seem to have been in almost as bad a condition as they were in the days of King Alfred. The Church prayers were still all said in Latin, and of course the congregations could not understand them, but it seems the priests themselves were not much better. Tyndale says he feels sure there were 20,000 priests and curates in England who could not give the right English of the Lord's Prayer, the Paternoster as they called it.

8. The clergy, high and low, soon made the place too hot for him, and he went to London, full of zeal to keep that promise about the Scriptures. He found very little encouragement there; he remained "the space almost of a year, beholding and marking with himself the course of the world, and especially the demeanour of the preachers, how they boasted themselves and set up their authority and kingdom; beholding also the pomp of the prelates" (this was just in the hey-day of Wolsey's glory), "with other things more which greatly misliked him." He received no protection or assistance, and finally decided that London was no place for him or his work. Accordingly, he went abroad and settled in Antwerp, where he was encouraged by some English merchants, and where he, helped by friends who were like-minded with himself, finished his translation. It was immediately printed; and now the question arose how to get the copies circulated and read in England. This was some time before Henry had broken with the Pope, and it was still against the law for laymen to read the Bible. One of the heads of the clergy, who was afterwards Archbishop of York, tells this in plain words. He had found out about Tyndale and the New Testament, and he writes to the king to warn him. "An Englishman, . . . your subject, . . . hath translated the New Testament into English, and within few days intendeth to

He translates the Bible.

return with the same imprinted to England. I need not advertise your Grace what infection and danger may ensue hereby if it be not withstood. . . . All our fathers and governors of the Church of England hath with all diligence forbid and eschewed publication of English Bibles." He exhorts the king to set forth the standard against these Philistines, and to undertread them that they shall not lift up their heads ; " knowing what harm such books (Bibles !) hath done in your realm in times past."

9. But the Protestants in England, some of them young students of Oxford and Cambridge, some of them poor workmen in London, formed themselves into a kind of society on purpose to receive and spread abroad these precious forbidden books ; and most wonderful adventures they had, and dangers, and hair-breadth escapes. The police contrived to lay hands on a great many of the Testaments after they were brought to England ; the bishops too, who were set upon destroying them, bought up all they could get. And one Sunday morning a fine sight was

1527.
The New
Testament
burnt in
St. Paul's.

to be seen in St. Paul's Cathedral. A platform was erected in the centre of the nave, on the top of which, enthroned in pomp of purple and gold and splendour, sate the great cardinal ; around him were bishops, abbots, and doctors, also splendid in gowns of damask and satin. In front of all this grandeur, within a railing, a great fire was burning, with the sinful books, both tracts and Testaments, ranged round it in baskets, waiting for the execution of the sentence. Presently six prisoners in penitential dresses carrying faggots were brought in. These poor men were Protestants who had been captured and persuaded to recant ; (we must not expect all men to be heroes). They were made to kneel down with their faggots on their shoulders, and beg pardon of God and Holy Church for their offences. Then they were taken within the rail, and led three times round the fire, casting in their faggots as they passed. Lastly the books, the Gospels of Christ, were thrown on the flames also, and no doubt the cardinal, the bishops, and the abbots felt very triumphant.

10. This time, however, their cleverness had a little overshot the mark. The condemned books had been bought through a certain merchant named Packington, who was a secret friend of Tyndale's. Foxe takes great pleasure in telling us the story. Packington says to the bishop, " ' If it be your lordship's pleasure, I must disburse money to pay for them, or else I cannot have

them, and so I will assure you to have every book of them that is printed and unsold.' The bishop, thinking he had the matter secured, said, 'Do your diligence, gentle Master Packington; get them for me, and I will pay whatsoever they cost, for I intend to burn and destroy them all at Paul's Cross.' This Augustine Packington went unto Tyndale, and declared the whole matter; and so, upon compact made between them, the Bishop of London had the books, Packington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money. After this Tyndale corrected the same New Testament again, and caused them to be newly imprinted, so that they came thick and threefold over into England."

11. Foxe gives us with equal enjoyment another specimen of the way in which the clergy tried to hinder the introduction of the Bible. A sermon was preached on the subject at Cambridge, by one of our old friends the friars. He undertook to prove that it was not expedient for the Scriptures to be in English, "lest the ignorant and vulgar sort might be brought in danger to leave their vocation, or else run into some inconvenience; as, for example, the ploughman, when he heareth this in the Gospel, 'No man that layeth his hand on the plough, and looketh back, is meet for the kingdom of God,' might peradventure, hearing this, cease from his plough. Likewise the baker, when he heareth that 'a little leaven corrupteth a whole lump of dough,' may perchance leave our bread unleavened, and so our bodies shall be unseasoned. . . . These, with other mo (more), this clerklly friar brought out, to the number of five, to prove his purpose. . . .

1529.
Latimer and
the friar.

12. "Master Latimer, hearing this friarly sermon of Doctor Buckenham, cometh againe the afternoon, or shortly after, to the church to answer the friar, where resorted to him a great multitude, as well of the university as of the town, both doctors and other graduates, with great expectation to hear what he could say; among whom also, directly in the face of Latimer, underneath the pulpit, sate Buckenham, the foresaid friar, prior of the Black Friars, with his black friar's cowl about his shoulders." After Latimer had preached some time, "refuting the friar, and answering his objections," he added, with reference to the ploughman and the leaven, that every language had its metaphors "and like figurative significations, so common and vulgar to all men that the very painters do paint them on walls and on houses. 'As for example,' saith he, looking towards the friar that sate over against him, 'when they paint a fox preaching out of a friar's cowl, none is so mad to take this to be a fox that preacheth, but

know well enough the meaning of the matter, which is to point out unto us what hypocrisy, craft, and subtle dissimulation lieth hid many times in these friars' cowls, willing us thereby to beware them.' In fine, friar Buckenham with this sermon was so dashed that never after durst he peep out of the pulpit against Master Latimer."

13. This "Master Latimer" was one of the greatest of the English reformers, a man who was sure to have much influence; hearty and earnest, bold, witty, and original; his sermons, many of which are still preserved, are very plain-spoken and pithy, and must have produced a great effect. Henry VIII., who, with all his arbitrariness, "loved a man" when he saw him, liked Latimer, often had him to preach before him, and presently made him Bishop of Worcester.

14. As for Tyndale, he was watched and persecuted for his noble work, imprisoned, and at last put to death as a heretic.

1535. The only letter of his that has been preserved is one that was written while he was in prison in the castle of Vilvorde in Flanders, and addressed to the governor. In it he pleads for a few comforts, a warmer cap, and a warmer coat; "for that which I have is very thin; also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings; my overcoat is worn out; my shirts are also worn out. . . . I wish also permission to have a candle in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark. But above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study. And in return may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if any other resolution has been come to concerning me, that I must remain during the whole winter, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God, to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose spirit I pray may ever direct your heart."

15. It would seem almost enough to make us despair of the world's progress altogether to read that letter, and picture that man; the world so needing instruction; he so able, so longing to give it, and condemned to sit through the long, dark evenings without books, without even a candle. "No, you shall not work for us," says the ignorant world. "But I will work for you, though I die for it," says the martyr, and he dies indeed. But his work lives, lives and bears fruit in a million hearts.

16. Four years after that pathetic letter was written, and when

Tyndale had been put to death at Antwerp, the English Bible was published by authority of the king. While Cromwell was minister the Protestants were much favoured, and he and Cranmer worked together to help their cause, and especially to encourage instead of forbid the reading of the Bible. One of the new English Bibles was now set up in every parish church in England. The title-page was ornamented with a picture. At the top sits King Henry on his throne, supreme head both of Church and State, holding in his hand the "Verbum Dei," which he distributes to the bishops and high officials; down at the bottom of the page are the people in general, both priests and laymen, holding out their hands eagerly for the books which the bishops distribute among them, and crying Vivat Rex, and God save the king. The second edition of this Bible, with the same title-page, is to be seen now in the British Museum.

1539.
The English
Bible pub-
lished by
authority.

17. Another of Cromwell's works was the one which we were prepared to expect before long—the putting down or dissolution of the monasteries. First the smaller ones were broken up. Wolsey had indeed already set the example in doing this, for the smaller ones were in a far worse and more disorderly condition than the larger; but before long Cromwell proceeded to suppress the large and wealthy ones, some of which were still decorous and religious, and where the monks and priors were really good and pious men, ready to die at their post sooner than give their sanction to what they looked on as sacrilege and robbery. This measure gave great offence to many of the people; the monasteries had been in some ways a real help and refuge to the poor, since they were almost always liberal and charitable, and ready to give food and lodging to those who needed it. As they did not, however, examine very carefully whether the applicants really did need their charity, they encouraged a great many in idleness and dependence who ought to have been at work, and thus a great many more were now added to the "sturdy beggars" whom the government did not know what to do with.

1536-9.
Dissolution
of the
monasteries.

18. Here and there some revolts took place, but Cromwell and the king were too strong to be resisted. The rebellions were easily put down, and the great work done. When the abbeys and priories were broken up, the monks and nuns received small pensions for the rest of their lives, varying according to their rank in the monastery; the nuns got about £4 a

year, which in those days would go as far as forty would do now. It appears that a great many of the younger, both monks and nuns, were overjoyed at receiving their liberty.

19. Immense riches were thus thrown into the hands of the government. Some of it, but not much, was used for religious purposes, for founding new bishoprics, colleges, and schools; the greater part the king used in rewarding his friends and courtiers. Thus it is that, even now, many laymen, nobles, and others live in what are still called abbeys and priories. Though there is little doubt that it was for the lasting good of the country that all this took place, it gave Henry and the Reformation a bad name, as being robbers and spoilers, that they kept so much of this great wealth for their own uses.

20. Now too came the end of Becket's shrine and the Canterbury pilgrimages. The king gave forth a proclamation, saying that he and his council, having looked into the matter, **1538.** found that Thomas à Becket, far from being a saint, was a rebel and a traitor. Henceforth no more honour was to be paid to him; no more pilgrims were to kneel at his tomb. The beautiful and costly shrine was broken up. That precious and miraculous jewel which the King of France had bestowed was set in a ring, which Henry wore upon his thumb, and was afterwards placed in a necklace by his daughter Mary.

21. All these wonderful changes have produced lasting effects on the thoughts, characters, and lives of Englishmen. The other events of the reign must be passed over hastily. **The king's domestic life.** Everybody knows that Henry VIII. had six wives, and we need not waste time over them. Gossip and scandal are still gossip and scandal, even when they are 300 years old. Two of the six wives were divorced; it was in making the match for one of these, Anne of Cleves, that Cromwell fell into disgrace and lost his head. Two were beheaded: one of whom was Anne Boleyn, for whose sake poor Queen Katherine had been set aside, and who was the mother of Queen Elizabeth. One died a natural death while the king was still alive; and the last, after being in some danger now and then, survived him. Yet he had but three children. Of those three not one left a child, and only one was considered by everybody to be legitimate.*

* Henry's wives:—

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Katherine of Aragon, divorced. | 4. Anne of Cleves, divorced. |
| 2. Anne Boleyn, beheaded. | 5. Katherine Howard, beheaded. |
| 3. Jane Seymour, died a natural death. | 6. Katherine Parr, survived him. |

22. Henry's latter days were not glorious. He had some unimportant wars both in France and Scotland, which brought neither profit nor renown. After the fall of Cromwell, who was a staunch Protestant, he fell back under the influence of the Romanist party. He published six articles (1539), containing many of the principal Roman Catholic doctrines, to which every one was bound to conform. But as it was not so easy for reasonable and thinking men to alter their opinions merely because the king had altered his, some more Protestants were burnt as heretics. Henry died, old before his time, **1547.**
in 1547. **His death.**

23. With all his faults and inconsistencies, it ought to be remembered that, compared with other countries of Europe, he guided England through a most dangerous and exciting crisis prudently and successfully. In Germany the Reformation was the cause of a most long and terrible war before it could be established in the countries which longed for it. The same was the case in Holland. In France and Spain the tyrannical kings crushed it altogether. In England, as we have seen, it was established almost peaceably, and soon, though not all at once, took firm root in the hearts of the people.

LECTURE XLIII.—THE STRUGGLE OF THE CHURCHES.

Edward VI. Protector Somerset. The Reformation urged forward. Revolt in the west. Revolt in the east. Death of Somerset. Death of Edward. Lady Jane Grey. Mary and Philip. Romanism restored. The Protestant martyrs.

1. At the end of the Wars of the Roses, which had been caused by rival families fighting for the throne, it was hoped that through the marriage of Henry of Lancaster with Elizabeth of York all such difficulties were ended for ever, and that their children and children's children would succeed each other in peace. But all these hopes proved vain; and though there were no more civil wars on these grounds, yet there were great disquiets and disputes, and many terrible deaths of innocent people, caused by the confusion of rival claimants.

2. Henry VIII., who was so anxious to have lawful heirs, and had put that forth, indeed, as the excuse for his matrimonial adventures, had really made the confusion greater. The House of Parliament had endeavoured to cut the knot by recognizing the claims of all his three children, **The children of Henry VIII.** though there were doubts about the legitimacy of two of them, the princesses Mary and Elizabeth. Those who believed that Katherine of Aragon had been Henry's lawful wife, and that the divorce made without the Pope's consent was illegal, looked on Anne Boleyn's daughter Elizabeth as illegitimate; those who considered the marriage between Henry and his brother's widow no marriage, and thought the divorce a real one, looked on Katherine's daughter Mary as illegitimate. But parliament had decided that both should be considered as lawful heirs to the crown in due order after their brother.

3. It did not seem very likely that all these three would die childless (though it fell out so in fact), but if they did, the crown was then to go to the descendants of Henry's younger sister. The elder one, who had married the King of Scotland, was set aside; but it was her grandson, who came to

the throne at last. Meanwhile, we have to attend to the reigns of Henry's three children, all of which were very important. The eldest of the three was the Princess Mary, daughter of Katherine of Aragon. One cannot help feeling great pity for her; her young days were made very bitter by the undeserved disgrace of her mother. After being looked on as princess royal, and heir to the crown, she had to endure the mortification of being treated as illegitimate, and seeing her mother divorced and sent away from the court, whilst a gay young rival was set up in her place. Moreover, both she and her mother were devoted to the old religion, the Spaniards being always the most fervent of Romanists. And as the fall of Katherine and of Romanism went hand in hand, so the personal and religious feeling went hand in hand in Mary's mind, and she grew up with an intolerable sense of wrong on both grounds. She does not seem to have been either beautiful or clever, and she was self-willed, like all the Tudors; but she was sincere and honest, and at this time more to be pitied than blamed.

4. The next daughter, Elizabeth, who at the death of her father was about fourteen, was the child of Anne Boleyn. She had her strong will too, but then she was clever, hearty, and good-looking. She was gay and vain, like her mother, and, moreover, stingy, untruthful, and artful; but she had many fine and strong points of character, and when her turn came to reign she was as much loved as her unfortunate sister was hated. She was brought up a Protestant, and Cranmer was her godfather, but she does not seem to have cared for religion half as much as for politics.

5. Next came young Edward, who was now about nine years old, and, whose mother having lived an irreproachable life, and died a natural death, as Henry's wife, was the undisputed heir to the throne. It is rather difficult to find out the truth about the character of those who lived at this period, because their biographers nearly always judged them according to which religious side they took. If they were Protestants, the Protestant writers make them out to be perfect, and like saints and angels, while the Roman Catholic ones can hardly find words bad enough for them; and just the contrary if they were on the other side; no one seemed able to judge dispassionately. It is perhaps difficult even for ourselves to do so, as most English people cannot help still feeling strongly about the disputes of that time. None of us care in the least now about the Red or the White Rose, or whether York or

1547.

Edward.

Lancaster gained the victory ; but most of us still care a great deal about our Protestant religion, our Bibles and Prayer-books, and should be quite ready to flame up at the idea of the Pope using any authority over our country. This makes the period of the Reformation so interesting.

6. But making all allowances for the partiality of Protestant writers, it is impossible not to see that Edward VI. was really a most remarkable boy, with wonderful intelligence, and a sweet and noble nature. He was described by one of his tutors as "the beautifullest creature that liveth under the sun, the liveliest, the most amiable, and the gentlest thing of all the world ; such a spirit of capacity in learning the things taught him by his schoolmasters, that it is a wonder to hear say ; and, finally, he hath such a grace of port and gesture in gravity when he cometh into any presence, that it should seem he were already a father, and yet passeth he not the age of ten years." When he was about thirteen years old it is said that he had learnt seven languages, and was thoroughly acquainted with his own, as well as with French and Latin. "Nor was he ignorant of logic, of the principles of natural philosophy, or of music." He also took great interest in affairs of State. One can hardly wonder that a boy who had received such an education, and had such a precocious mind, never lived to grow up. "That child was so educated, possessed such abilities, and caused such expectations that he appeared a miracle."

7. He was also a very religious child, and we are particularly told with what wonderful pleasure he listened to the long sermons which it was the custom of the reforming bishops to preach before him. But if they were all as lively and racy as Bishop Latimer's, this appears less surprising.

8. The king being so young, the government was placed in the hands of a council, at the head of which was Edward's uncle, the Duke of Somerset, brother to his mother. This duke was a most decided Protestant, far more decided than Henry VIII. had been, and he and Archbishop Cranmer pushed on the Reformation most vigorously. The greatest changes they made were these, which had been partly attempted before, but had not been definitely settled :—

- (1) The Church service was to be in English instead of in Latin.
- (2) Images, crosses, pictures, and the like were no longer to be treated with excessive veneration, and in most cases were destroyed.

**Protector
Somerset
and Pro-
testantism.**

- (3) Worship of the Virgin and the saints was to be given up.
- (4) Confession to a priest was not to be compulsory.
- (5) The doctrine of transubstantiation was declared untrue.
- (6) The clergy were to be permitted to marry.

9. Though these things may seem quite plain to us now, and most of us have been taught them all our lives, they were very serious changes to force upon people all at once. It is very difficult to give up what we have believed from our childhood, even when it is quite clear to our understanding that the belief was mistaken. And about these points numbers of half-educated, ignorant people could never have that made quite clear to them, whilst numbers of others clung with affectionate tenderness to the faith of their fathers. It must have given bitter pain to these people to see and hear much that they had been used to love and reverence treated with contempt and derision. The churches in England up to this time had looked much as they now look in France and Italy; they had sacred pictures in them, images which were thought very holy, and before which poor people would go and pray, with a full conviction that their prayers would be heard. The Protestants, regarding all this as idolatry, began to pull down the images and to break the stained glass windows and the carved stone crosses. This must have hurt the feelings of the old worshippers very sorely, and one cannot but wish, if done at all, that it might have been more gently done. But the powers in authority were not for gentleness; they pushed on very harshly, and they persecuted those who would not conform. They had not yet learned the spirit of Christ, and were ever ready to "call down fire from heaven" on those who differed. They burnt a poor woman just now for holding some wrong opinions about Christ's incarnation. They put two of the Roman Catholic bishops, Gardiner and Bonner, in prison, after vainly trying to make them preach sermons before the king and the court in favour of the reformed religion and against their consciences; till Gardiner very naturally said he wished the Protector Somerset "would leave religion to the clergy, and cease to meddle with it." He also declared he would speak what he thought, if he were to be hanged for it when he left the pulpit.

10. The Reformation, however, was heartily welcomed, and made much progress in London and in other towns, especially the sea-ports, where the people were more intelligent, better educated, and could read their new Bibles. In the more remote parts of the country it made but little way, and the people were

greatly enraged at the changes which were introduced. Before long those in the west country, in Cornwall and Devonshire, began to rebel.

11. The prayer-book was ordered to be first read in English on a Whitsunday. This prayer-book, which was principally arranged by Cranmer, contained scarcely anything

1549.
Rising in
the western
counties.

new; nearly all the prayers were translated from the old Latin ones, which had been used by Christians through many centuries, leaving out the parts which were contrary to the reformed doctrines. But as they were now in English instead of in Latin, they were as good, or rather as bad, as new in the ears of the unlearned, and they listened with great indignation on that Whitsunday. In particular there was one village on Dartmoor where the congregation was much offended. The next morning, when the clergyman was going into church to say the prayers for Whitmonday, the parishioners came about him, declaring they would have none of the new fashions, they would have the old religion of their fathers. The priest was most likely very glad in his heart to be compelled to go back to the old way. He put on his vestments and said mass in Latin, "the common people in all the country round clapping their hands for joy."

12. This was the beginning of it; other places round soon followed the example; and when it was heard of in London the council sent orders to have the resistance put down promptly and sternly. It was not at all easy to put down. Thousands of men rose in rebellion; there were some hard battles, and the city of Exeter was besieged; but in the end the government conquered; the rebels were defeated, and their leaders put to death; one priest was hanged on his own church tower.

13. While this was going on in the west, another rebellion broke out in the east; not on religious grounds this time, for the eastern counties were more inclined to Protestantism, but rather in resistance to the great land-

Rising in
the eastern
counties.

owners, who were enclosing common lands, and also turning a great deal of ploughed land into sheep-farms. This practice had been a serious grievance to the poor for a long time, ever since it had been first begun soon after the Black Death. Sir Thomas More, who was a great observer of the condition of the poor, had written about it, saying that the sheep, "which are naturally mild and easily kept in order, may be said now to devour men, and unpeople not only villages, but towns." The enclosing of the common lands was almost worse,

because it was depriving the poor of what had always been their right, the feeding of their pigs and other animals. Protector Somerset and Bishop Latimer thought these poor men had some right on their side. Latimer, indeed, in his plain-spoken way, preached a sermon on the subject, in which, though he said both parties were covetous, yet he very clearly defined what the labourers had a right to demand.

14. "The poorest ploughman is in Christ," said he, "equal with the greatest prince that is. Let them therefore have sufficient to maintain them, and to find them their necessities." He says they must have some sheep to "help to fatten the ground;" they must have swine for their food; "their bacon is their venison (for they shall now have *hangum tuum* if they get any other venison)"—it was felony to steal deer; "they must have other cattle, as horses to draw their plough, and for carriage of things to the markets, and kine for their milk and cheese. . . . These cattle must have pasture, which pasture if they lack, the rest must needs fail them. And pasture they cannot have if the land is taken in and enclosed from them."

15. Commissioners were sent down into the disturbed country to inquire into the complaints of the people, but they did but little good. "I remember mine own self," says Latimer, "a certain giant, a great man who sate in commission about such matters, and when the townsmen should bring in (or report) what had been inclosed, he frowned and chafed, and so looked and threatened the poor men that they durst not ask for their right."

16. These men also rose in rebellion, took possession of the city of Norwich, and made themselves so dangerous that they too were obliged to be put down with the strong hand, and their principal leaders executed. What made the matter worse was that the government hired German troops to fight and subdue the English. It seems that no less than 10,000 men were killed in these outbreaks.

17. These disasters brought the Duke of Somerset into great discredit. He managed foreign affairs as badly, and the nation lost confidence in him. He had also amassed a large fortune for himself out of the Church lands, and was not wise enough to be unostentatious. He was fond of show and splendour, and built himself a large and stately palace in the Strand (where Somerset House now stands). To make room for it he pulled down a parish church, and to provide materials he blew up with gunpowder a beautiful Roman Catholic chapel lately built, and

1552.
Death of
Somerset.

part of the cloisters of St. Paul's. All this gave great offence ; and in the end the duke was deposed, and, like so many eminent men in those days, ended his life on the scaffold.

18. But though an imprudent, impetuous man, he was well-meaning and generous, and when he was beheaded much sorrow and pity were felt for him. The king being still very young, another man now came into power, the Duke of Northumberland. He professed to be a zealous Protestant too, but most of his real care was not for religion at all, but for his own family interest. And now began fresh troubles about the succession to the throne. King Edward was already in very delicate health ; it was feared that he would not live long, and there was a terrible prospect before the Protestants if he died. The next person to reign would be the Princess Mary, a proud, narrow-minded, bitter, and bigoted woman.

19. Northumberland worked upon the mind of the young king, who was a most ardent Protestant, and persuaded him to make a will, altering the succession, which he had no right to do without the consent of parliament. Moreover, he induced him to pass over not only his sister Mary, but also Elizabeth, and to go to the family who came next after them, the children of Henry VII.'s younger daughter. One of the granddaughters of this princess was Lady Jane Grey, who had been lately married to the Duke of Northumberland's son, and it was she whom the duke fixed on as heiress of the crown. But, of course, if they went to that family at all, they should have taken the mother, who was still alive, before the daughter.

20. Edward, however, was persuaded to make a will to this effect, in the interest, as he hoped, of the Protestant religion. Cranmer, to do him justice, was very unwilling to consent, for though he knew what Mary was, and that she had a special grudge against himself for the part he had taken in her mother's divorce, still he was convinced that she had a right to the crown unless parliament declared the contrary. However, he was brought to consent at last, and very soon after the

1553.
Death of
Edward VI.

young king died. One of his last acts, after hearing a sermon by Bishop Ridley on the duty of charity, was to found the Blue-Coat School and St. Bartholomew's Hospital, both of which are still doing such good work. Almost his last words were, " Oh, Lord God, save Thy chosen people of England . . . defend this realm from papistry,

and maintain the true religion, that I and my people may praise Thy holy name; for Thy Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

21. Directly he was dead the troubles began. There were two queens, or would-be queens, each with their party. Lady Jane Grey was a great contrast to Mary; she was now about sixteen years old, and as good and wise as her cousin Edward had been. It was customary at that time for young ladies of high rank to receive as good an education as their brothers did, and this young girl is said to have learnt, besides her own, seven other languages, including Arabic and Chaldee, though one has one's doubts about that. She was, at any rate, a good Greek scholar, and could enjoy reading Plato in the original when about thirteen or fourteen years old. A very eminent scholar of that day, Roger Ascham, gives an account of a visit he paid her about this time, and his great surprise at finding her with her Greek books instead of amusing herself with the rest of the family, who were hunting in the park. He could not forbear expressing his astonishment, and inquiring how she found so much pleasure in that deep philosophy. Her answer made it all very clear. "I will tell you," she said, "and I will tell you a truth which perchance you will marvel at. One of the greatest benefits which ever God gave me, is that He sent me such sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence of either father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go; eat, drink, be merry, or sad; be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened; yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways which I will not name for the honour I bear them, so without measure misordered that I think myself in hell till time come that I must go to Master Aylmer, who teaches me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing when I am with him; and when I am called from him I fall to weeping, because whatsoever I do else but learning is full of grief, trouble, and fear, and wholly misliking unto me. And thus my book has been so much my pleasure, and brings daily to me more and more pleasure."

22. She was brought up as a Protestant, and seems to have really reflected on the subjects of dispute, and to have been sincerely religious. When she was sixteen she was married to Lord Guildford Dudley, but she had no idea of the ambitious schemes and plots of her father-in-law, and when he, with four

other noblemen, came to tell her that King Edward was dead, and that she was to be Queen of England, she was terribly shocked and frightened. She says herself, in a long letter written by her afterwards to Queen Mary, that, "overcome by sudden and unlooked-for sorrow, she fell to the ground weeping bitterly, and that she heard these things with a troubled mind, and with much grief and displeasure of heart." She complains that she was deceived by the duke and the council, and ill-treated by her husband and his mother. Thus this sweet and innocent girl was led to her ruin. She was proclaimed queen, and for one short fortnight acted as such; but the whole nation well knew that she had no right to that title, and when Mary was proclaimed by her supporters she was universally accepted. The Duke of Northumberland was tried and beheaded, and Lady Jane Grey and her young husband were imprisoned in the Tower.

23. Mary very soon began to show her will about religion. On the day of her coronation she even refused to sit in St. Edward's chair, the chair with the sacred stone, fearing it had been polluted by having been the seat of her Protestant brother Edward, and she was crowned sitting in another chair sent over by the Pope. The two Roman Catholic bishops, Bonner and Gardiner, were brought out of prison and promoted to great authority, while Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, and other Protestants were kept in confinement. The English prayer-book was set aside, and the Latin mass said again.

24. It was considered very important that the queen should marry. Her will was as strong upon this point as it was upon religion. The whole country wished her to marry some Englishman; but Mary had set her heart upon marrying her cousin Philip, who was heir to the crown of Spain, and very soon became king. She had never even seen more of him than a portrait, but it appears she fell deeply in love with that. Now the English people hated and detested the thought of this match. Spain had lately risen to be one of the most powerful, rich, and important countries of Europe. Philip's grandfather having married the heiress of the Duke of Burgundy, he was not only King of Spain, but also of the rich provinces of Flanders, and many other territories. Moreover, the Spaniards had taken possession of a great part of the New World they had helped to discover, especially Mexico and Peru, where they found mines of gold, which made them enormously wealthy.

25. The English felt persuaded that if their queen married the King of Spain, and above all, if he should come to be King of England too, as his wife would be sure to wish, his vast power and wealth would, as it were, swallow up and overpower England, which would sink into being a mere dependency of Spain. This was one great objection; another was the religion.

26. The Spaniards were the most bigoted of all Papists, and the most cruel; and this Philip was perhaps the most cold-blooded and hard-hearted persecutor whom the world has ever seen, except his general and deputy, the Duke of Alva. That man's portrait was painted by Rubens, and is now in England; his pale face looking as though cast in iron; his tall, splendid horse seeming to trample the world under its hoofs, and the red sky behind. One can hardly hear the names of those two without a shudder. It was in Spain above all that the terrible Inquisition flourished, the grand work of the "Domini Canes." It was an awful power; the ^{The} Inquisition. inquisitors worked in the dark; any one suspected of heresy might be seized, dragged before a mysterious tribunal without knowing what charge would be brought against him, nor who brought it, questioned, tortured, and burnt.

27. During the three centuries that this dreadful power existed in Spain, it is believed that 32,000 persons were burnt by it, and hundreds of thousands suffered other hard punishments. The last of its victims was a woman, who was burnt less than 100 years ago. At the period of Mary's accession the Inquisition was in full vigour, doing its best or worst to put down the Reformation. In Spain it was quite successful; the Protestants were utterly crushed; and Philip wished to do just the same in his other dominion of Flanders, where there were a great many Protestants. It was at Antwerp, as we saw, that Tyndale and his friends worked so long.

28. A series of edicts had been published to recall the Protestants or heretics to the faith of the Church. Part of one of them ran thus: "Women who have fallen into heresy shall be buried alive. Men, *if they recant*, shall lose their heads; if they continue obstinate they shall be burnt at the stake. If man or woman be *suspected* of heresy, no one shall shelter or protect him or her. . . . The Inquisition shall inquire into the *private opinions* of every person of whatever degree. . . . Those who know where heretics are hiding shall denounce them, or they shall suffer as heretics themselves." 1520—50.

Under these edicts it is incredible how many human beings were murdered.

29. It is not wonderful that the English were resolved to have as little to do with Spain and with King Philip as they could. At the prospect of Mary's marriage the

1554. **Rising of the men of Kent.** Kentish men, who seem to have had a greater genius for revolting than the rest of the country, rose once more in rebellion. This time they were not led by men like Wat Tyler or Jack Cade, they were headed by a Kentish gentleman, Sir Thomas Wyatt, who was a scholar and a poet, and was worthy of a better end. His father had been a poet too, and Tennyson shows him to us in his old castle in Kent, stringing his father's sonnets,

"Left about
Like loosely scatter'd jewels,"

just as he is called away to head the rebels.

"Ah, grey old castle of Alington, green field
Beside the brimming Medway, it may chance
That I shall never look upon you more,"

he says, as he turns away, never, indeed, to look upon them more. Once again the rebels marched to London, and once again they were defeated. Mary behaved like a queen; she showed so brave and gallant a spirit that, for once, she kindled a sort of enthusiasm; the Londoners took her part, the rebellion was crushed, and Wyatt and the other principal leaders put to death. After this, though the young prisoners in the Tower, Lady Jane Grey and her husband, were perfectly innocent of having taken any share in it, it was considered prudent to prevent any farther danger from them by beheading them also. It was even proposed, in order to establish Mary securely on her throne, to put her sister Elizabeth to death; but this was rather too bold a measure to venture upon, for Elizabeth was already popular with the people.

30. After all this was over, Mary, who was as pertinacious and self-willed as all the Tudors, though far more stupid than most of them, took her own way, and married the **The queen's marriage.** King of Spain. It was a very unhappy marriage. England hated Philip, and Philip hated England. He had no love for his wife, who was older than himself, and not attractive, though she really loved him, strange as it appeared

to every one who knew them. She longed earnestly for a child, but she never had one.

31. The other great thing on which she had set her heart was to bring back England to the Church, and to be reconciled to the Pope. It seemed as if she also succeeded in that for a time. Her cousin Cardinal Pole came over to England as the Pope's legate, bringing pardon and absolution. The Houses of Parliament, both Lords and Commons, bent their English pride down to the point of falling on their knees before him to be absolved and reconciled. But though they consented to humble themselves so far, they would not consent, as the queen desired, to give up their Church lands again, their abbey and priories, and the Pope was compelled to yield that point. They perhaps thought, like Prince Bismarck, "*Beati possidentes*."

England
brought
back to the
Pope.

32. The statutes against heretics were now revived, and the work of Mary which has left the deepest impression on the hearts of Englishmen was the persecution to which she lent herself, and which earned for her her terrible name of "Bloody Mary." Her principal supporters and coadjutors were Gardiner and Bonner, whose cruelty seconded hers. Bonner was the Bishop of London, and a letter written some years afterwards, on the occasion of his death, tells that they were compelled to bury him privately at dead of night, lest "the people of the city (to whom Bonner in his life was most odious) . . . might have been moved with indignation, and so some quarrelling and tumult might have ensued thereupon." Those who still loved their Bibles, and there were a great many of them, even among the humbler classes, had to hide them away now. "When my great grandfather wished to read to his family," wrote the descendant of a Protestant blacksmith, "one of the children was stationed at the door to give notice if he saw the proctor (an officer of the spiritual court) make his appearance," in which case the Bible was hastily hidden away. Two hundred persons or more were publicly burned during Mary's reign of five years.

1555.
Persecution
of the
Protestants.

33. Now at last came the end of the brave old Bishop Latimer. He and Ridley, another of the most eminent Protestant bishops, who had been in prison for two years, were condemned to be burnt at Oxford. His preaching and his speaking had had a wonderful effect on men's minds; but his last words were his most famous. There is hardly a child in England who has not heard how he turned to his fellow-mⁿ

Latimer and
Ridley.

when the fire was kindled, saying, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man ; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out."

34. Prophetic words. That candle never has been put out. We may trace the real success of the reformed religion, and the deep root it has struck in English hearts, in great measure to Queen Mary and her persecutions. When the people saw the martyrs, their courage, and faith, and constancy in the midst of cruel pain ; when they heard their noble words, it had more effect than whole libraries of arguments. All the sympathy, admiration, and reverence the people had they poured at the feet of the martyrs ; all their hatred they turned on the cruel queen and her advisers.

35. Not long after the martyrdom of Latimer and Ridley it came to the turn of Archbishop Cranmer. He was not made of such heroic stuff as they, and at first, to save his life, he was induced to sign a recantation, declaring that he renounced, abhorred, and detested all the heresies and errors of Luther, that he acknowledged the Bishop of Rome to be the supreme head of the Church and Christ's vicar on earth, and that he believed in transubstantiation, purgatory, and all things which the Church of Rome held and taught.

1556.
Cranmer.

36. "The queen," says Foxe, "having now gotten a time to revenge her old greefe (grievance), received his recantation very gladly ; but of her purpose to put him to death she would nothing relent. Now was Cranmer's cause in a miserable taking, who neither inwardly had any quiet in his own conscience, nor yet outwardly any help in his adversaries." His recantation availed nothing, and he too was led forth to die. Now his spirit rose, and he found courage to do what was perhaps harder than death itself, to own in the hearing of all the people that fear and faint-heartedness had made him false ; that the writing which he had signed was contrary to the truth, and contrary to his heart ; "and forasmuch," said he, "as my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefore, for when I come to the fire it shall first be burned."

37. His enemies, on hearing this, "began to rage, fret, and fume, and to tax him with falsehood and dissimulation. 'Ah, my masters,' quoth he, 'do not you take it so. Always since I lived hitherto I have been a hater of falsehood, and a lover of simplicity, and never before this time have I dissembled ;' and in saying this all the tears that remained in his body appeared in his eyes. . . . It is marvellous what commiseration and

pity moved all men's hearts that beheld so heavy a countenance, and such abundance of tears in an old man of so reverend dignity. . . . And when the wood was kindled, and the fire began to burn near him, stretching out his arm, he put his right hand into the flame, which he held so steadfast and immovable . . . that all men might see his hand burned before his body was touched. His body did so abide the burning of the flame with such constancy and steadfastness that, standing always in one place, he seemed to move no more than the stake to which he was bound ; his eyes were lifted up unto heaven, and oftentimes he repeated his '*unworthy* right hand' so long as his voice would suffer him ; and using of the words of Stephen, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, in the greatness of the flame, he gave up the ghost."

38. Happily for England, Mary's reign was short. Her latter years were very miserable. Her husband left her and went away to his own dominions ; for the English would never consent to promise, as she wished, that he should be king after her death ; but he drew her and England into a war with France, which had a disastrous end. The city of Calais was the one little spot of French ground which, after all the centuries of fighting, had remained to the English, and they were bent upon at least keeping that. In this war, however, the French regained possession of it. England no longer had a foothold in France ; and this loss, terrible as it was felt to be by all the country, seemed to be almost the queen's death-blow. "When I die," she said, "Calais will be found written in my heart."

1558.
Loss of
Calais.

The poor, proud, forsaken woman, loved by no one, hardly pitied as she deserved, died before that year was out. Cardinal Pole died at the very same time, and the Pope lost all power in England for ever.

1558.
Death of
Mary.

LECTURE XLIV.—THE TWO QUEENS.

Elizabeth. Her character. Her ministers. The Church and the Puritans. Mary, Queen of Scots. Babington's conspiracy. Trial and execution of Mary.

1. WHEN Mary died it seemed as if a thick black cloud was rolled away from the sky, and Elizabeth shone out like a "bright occidental star," as she is called in our
1558. Bibles. The contrast between her and her sister Elizabeth. seemed greater than ever. Mary had grown more and more morose, more and more cruel and bitter. Elizabeth was the people's hope and darling. Mary had been afraid of her, and persecuted her, which made them love her all the more. There was much that was attractive about her; she was as well educated as her brother and Lady Jane Grey; she knew Latin and Greek, French and Italian; she liked poetry, music, and dancing; she enjoyed everything gay and splendid. She had indeed a great many faults, but in spite of them all she was the pride and idol of the English nation throughout her long reign.

2. And why? Because to the bottom of her heart she loved her people. Outside she was vain, changeable, fickle, deceitful; but in her heart's core she loved England, and whatever she did or said, she was always seeking its peace, its glory, and its happiness. In the very first speech made in her name to parliament she said that "nothing, no worldly thing under the sun, was so dear to her as the love and goodwill of her subjects." And this she had and deserved.

3. She was self-willed and arbitrary, like all her race; she could cow bishops and browbeat earls. "I will have here but one mistress, and no master," she said. But while her will was always for the good of the nation, the nation's will went with hers. If ever a time came that they clashed, which on certain points they sometimes did, then Elizabeth knew how to give way. And she would give way so frankly, so generously, so heartily that she made the people love her better than ever. If

they came before her full of anger and complaints and resentment, they left her with tears of joy, and shouting, "God save the queen."

4. The country was in a terrible state when she came to the throne. It was thus described in an address to the council: "The queen poor; the realm exhausted; the nobility poor and decayed; good captains and soldiers wanting; the people out of order; justice not executed; all things dear; . . . division among ourselves; war with France; the French king bestriding the realm, one foot in Calais, and the other in Scotland; steadfast enemies, but no steadfast friends."

This was how Elizabeth found England; how she left it we shall see.

5. Everything depended on her choice of counsellors and ministers, and her wisdom in this main point was truly marvelous. Perhaps no sovereign was ever surrounded by such a body of statesmen as Elizabeth gathered around her, and kept around her to the end; for Her
ministers. though she was perverse and capricious beyond all words in her treatment of them, they were nobly faithful to her and to the nation. These men she did not choose among the high aristocracy. Whether it was that she wished to carry on the policy of her grandfather, Henry VII., in humbling the nobles and bringing forward the middle classes, or whether she really found more talent and genius for governing in that station, true it is that most of her ministers, Cecil, Bacon, Walsingham, and others, were said to be "all sprung from the earth." This was rather an exaggerated way of putting it, however, since they were all gentlemen by birth and breeding.

6. Queen Mary's husband, Philip of Spain, had been much disappointed that the English people would not hear of making him King of England, and successor to his wife; but he was determined not to lose his hold on the country Elizabeth and
Philip. altogether; his earnest wish still was to keep it under the Roman Church, as Mary had (outwardly) left it. He took care to be on good terms with Elizabeth, and tried to make her subservient, and a sort of tool of his own. He thought this would be quite easy, as she was young and inexperienced, and her country poor, weak, and friendless. He, on the other hand, was the richest and most powerful king in Christendom.

7. But he little knew with whom he had to deal, and that this untried queen and poor little island would baffle and defy him, and triumph over him in the end. The contest went on for a

great many years, and its end, so glorious to England, even now makes us thrill with pride and wonder. For the present it was carried on very quietly and cunningly on both sides. Elizabeth was cautious and prudent; she did not openly quarrel with her brother-in-law, but she just took her own way. The Spanish ambassadors, who knew how weak she was, and how strong their master was, were absolutely bewildered to see how little she cared for his opinion and advice. Sometimes they thought she was a mere blind, reckless fool; at other times they thought she was possessed by the devil, or indeed by a hundred thousand devils.

Philip, at one time, thought of marrying her; not out of love, but for the sake of getting a firmer hold on her and the country, and, as he said, "maintaining that realm in the religion which by God's help has been restored in it;" but she would not consent, though for the present she wished to keep on fair terms with him.

8. The matter of her marriage was a most important one. She was the last of her family, and it was a very grave question who was to come after her if she died leaving no child.

The question of Elizabeth's marriage. All the country shuddered at the thought of a disputed succession. It would be worse now than even in the old days of the Wars of the Roses, because of the state of religion. There were two great religious parties, each of whom had bitter reasons to hate the other. The true heir after Elizabeth, according to the laws of inheritance, was the young Queen of Scotland, who was descended from Henry VII.'s eldest daughter. But there were strong objections to her as possible Queen of England. In the first place, she was married to the Dauphin of France, and in all likelihood would be Queen of France in due course; then England might become a mere province of France, as it had been feared it might become a province of Spain when Mary married the Spanish king. Moreover, both France and Scotland were, as usual, quarrelling and fighting with England, and there was an old and deep antipathy between them both and this country.

9. But worse than all this, she was a decided Romanist. Not that, judging by her actions, she was in the least religious at heart, but that was the religion she professed and would favour and protect. This was enough to set all the Protestants against wishing for her as queen. Everybody implored Elizabeth to marry somebody, and kept on imploring the same in vain for the next twenty years. She never would say No, and she never would say Yea. This was her usual way in all matters. No one ever knew where

to have her ; she seemed to enjoy playing with everybody ; keeping them on the tenter-hooks, wondering, hoping, fearing ; whilst all the time she would hold her own plans secret as long as she chose. She had crowds of suitors—kings, dukes, archdukes ; sometimes she appeared to favour one, and sometimes another, but in the end she would have none of them. She was the “ Virgin Queen ” to the last.

10. It is impossible quite to judge why she would not marry. The only man she seems to have really loved was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, a fine, handsome, flattering courtier ; him she favoured, and evidently liked so much that it was universally believed and feared that she meant to marry him. But his character was bad, and he had a wife already, who died in a very mysterious way ; and though it could never be proved that he had her murdered to make room for the queen, it looked very like it. The story is told in Scott's novel of ‘ Kenilworth,’ but though that tale gives a very vivid picture of Elizabeth, Leicester, &c., and in that sense is perhaps poetically true, it is not historically true, and the real facts about Amy Robsart were quite different.

11. One reason for Elizabeth's refusing to marry may very likely have been that there were those two strong religious parties in the kingdom, and she could not marry to please both. If she chose a Protestant husband she offended the Catholics ; if she chose a Catholic then she offended the Protestants. She contrived in a most wonderful way all through her long reign to keep both parties more or less loyal to her, and would have succeeded still more fully had it not been for her dangerous rival, Mary, Queen of Scots.

12. Elizabeth herself was a Protestant, though, at any rate at first, not what we should call a very decided Protestant, except on the one grand point of the supremacy of the crown, and its absolute independence of the Pope. She was as determined as ever her father had been to be head of the Church. But she rather approved of several things in the Roman Catholic Church to which the Protestants objected. She liked the celibacy of the clergy just as much as she liked her own ; she liked crucifixes, lighted candles, vestments, and an ornate service. By this time a great many of the Protestants bitterly objected to all these. Because they said they wished for a purer service, these extreme Protestants received the nickname of **The Puritans.**

13. The rules of the Church of England had been framed in a large and liberal spirit, allowing a good deal of liberty in

matters like those, in order to make it easier for the people to conform to it. It would naturally have been very difficult for those who had been used all their lives to the splendid services of Rome, to see everything of that sort taken away at once. Even those who know how really unimportant such external matters are, and who have been taught from their infancy that "God is a spirit," who seeks a spiritual worship, have their feelings on very trivial points. A person who has been bred up in the Church of England would not exactly like to see the clergyman read the prayers in his every-day coat, or the communion-table a bare board on trestles, as some of the Puritans began to desire.

14. Cranmer and Ridley had tried to adopt a sort of middle course, which might please all, or not greatly displease many. Nobody as yet could understand that differences of opinion on such points were quite natural and quite harmless—even desirable. The one idea was that all the people of the land must have exactly the same religion; must all go to the same churches, say the same prayers, and believe the same doctrines. It was a very long time before any one could see how impossible it is, when once people begin to think at all, that they should all think alike; and how narrow and limited the thoughts of a nation would be if they could do so. We know now how good it is for the whole country that some see one side and some see another; some love one way and some another; all these different opinions and feelings being our way of trying to arrive at the truth, which is too great and too high for any one poor mortal to grasp altogether.

15. As yet no one could realize this; except sometimes the party which happened to be down, and which then, being oppressed, could see very clearly the beauty of toleration and charity, but forgot it again when the wheel turned round and brought them to the top. Elizabeth and her counsellors were determined all the people in the country should go to church and use the prayer-book; they made that as easy as they could for them; but those who would not conform, whether Romanists or Puritans, were persecuted with great impartiality. Though this was very tyrannical, still they did not persecute at all as Mary and Bonner had done, for Elizabeth was not cruel by nature, and her prime minister, Burleigh (or Cecil), was always in favour of moderation. But the Protestant bishops and archbishops, Parker, Whitgift, and others, were as arbitrary and inquisitorial as any Pope or Dominican could be. The Puritan clergy were deprived of their livings, sent to prison for holding private religious meet-

ings, and oppressed in a great many ways, but they were not burnt to death.

16. The Romanists, however, were looked on as far more dangerous than the Puritans; and the excited feeling between the two religious parties was kept at a fever pitch by the events which occurred abroad. In France, the Romish party, headed by a cruel Italian woman, Catherine de Medicis, the king's mother, had fallen upon the unsuspecting Protestants and murdered them by tens of thousands. The "Massacre of St. Bartholomew," as it is called, because it was begun on the morning of that saint's day, spread from Paris to many other towns, and went on for several days. The Catholics exulted in their triumph. Philip of Spain laughed aloud for joy. The Pope ordered a solemn Te Deum to be sung, and went in state to thank God for the slaughter of His children. But in England the news was received with a shudder of horror, and when the French ambassador presented himself in a propitiatory manner before the queen, he found her and the whole court dressed in deep mourning, and was received with sorrowful and indignant silence.

The Romanists.

1572.

17. A great many people in this reign, indeed, suffered death, as they said, and perhaps thought, for their religion. Elizabeth and her government always said it was not for religion at all, but for treason. Religion and politics were so mixed together now that it was not always easy to distinguish them, and there is no doubt that many Roman Catholics looked on it as a pious work to conspire against the Protestant queen. The most notable of all these was Mary, Queen of Scots, whose death is generally looked on as the darkest blot in Elizabeth's reign.

18. We have seen that Mary was really the next heir to the crown if Elizabeth left no child. But as she was a rigorous Catholic in her own way, she would have been very distasteful to the Protestants in England, even had there been nothing else against her. But there was a great deal more. She had been many years in France, and when the dauphin her husband died she came back to Scotland with her character already formed. Scotland had taken up the Reformation still more vigorously than England had done, and the Scotch reformers, with Knox at their head, were vehement and severe Puritans, very strict and stern. Mary was nineteen; pleasure-loving, beautiful, and attractive; so attractive that hardly any man could come near her through her whole life (except the stern John Knox) without being more or less captivated by her.

Mary of Scotland.

But her character was self-indulgent and unprincipled. She conducted herself so disgracefully in Scotland, being charged at last with the murder of her second husband, Darnley, and other horrible crimes, that, beautiful and fascinating as she was, the Scotch nation rose in rage and horror, and would not have her for their queen any longer.

1567. 19. She fled to England, expecting that Elizabeth would take her part; but the English government made her prisoner, and would not give her up. She was kept in England for nineteen years, being considered too dangerous to be let loose.

1568. But she was still more dangerous as a prisoner than she could have been free. The Roman Catholics of England seem to have forgotten or disbelieved the crimes laid to her charge, and to have regarded her as a beautiful, persecuted saint. She had friends abroad too, in France and in Spain. They all spent their lives in weaving plots for rescuing her, dethroning Elizabeth, and making her Queen of England. The Pope himself, Gregory XIII., gave his sanction to the murder of Elizabeth. To such a pass had religion and religious hatred now come.

The Romish plots.

20. Priests and Jesuits travelled all about the country in various disguises, to stir up the Roman Catholic gentry and others against the queen. One of them, Ballard, went about dressed as an officer, in a blue velvet jerkin, and a cap and feathers. Everybody was kept in a ferment. The Queen of Scots and her attendants were very clever. They knew that any letters they sent openly would be intercepted and read by the government, but they found means to send out and to receive plenty of dangerous letters secretly. If a box of clothes or of books was sent to them from London or Paris, there would come letters inclosed in the frames of the boxes or hidden under the lining. Sometimes a small roll of paper would be sewn into the hollowed heel of a new boot or shoe. Sometimes a set of white handkerchiefs would be written all over with invisible ink.

21. More than one rebellion broke out and was put down. Elizabeth's life was felt to be in such danger that a voluntary association of loyal men joined themselves to protect her, vowing that they would have the life of any one who should attempt the death of their queen. At last one more plot was made for assassinating Elizabeth and rescuing Mary. Elizabeth had been very confiding to the Romanist gentry, hoping to win their fidelity and affection, and she

Babington's conspiracy.

had many young Catholic gentlemen in her service and at court. Six of these, headed by one Babington, pledged themselves to murder their mistress. The letters to and from Mary, who was now imprisoned in Fotheringay Castle, in Northamptonshire, were carried in barrels of beer with false bottoms. Elizabeth and her secretary Walsingham knew all about it, for the brewer was a double traitor, and showed all the letters before delivering them.

22. Elizabeth had the courage to wait and give no sign till the right moment came. When sufficient evidence had been collected the conspirators were seized and tried. They confessed all. Mary declared to the last that she knew nothing about it; and it is certainly true that the letters were not in her own handwriting; but if ever anything was clearly proved in this world, it was proved almost beyond a doubt that she did know and approve of all.

23. The Protestant part of the country had long demanded her death, knowing that there would be no safety as long as she lived. Elizabeth had never yet brought herself to consent; she was neither cruel nor a coward, and she wished to spare Mary's life; but now, at last, it was too late. Babington's conspiracy, so deep-laid, and so basely treacherous, could not be passed over. Mary was tried, found guilty, and condemned; she braved it out to the last that she was innocent in the face of all the evidence, and contrived to make it seem that she was a martyr to her religion. She died very bravely and majestically, though there can hardly be a doubt that she died with a lie in her right hand.

1587.
Execution
of Mary.

Elizabeth had been almost driven into signing her death warrant; still she had done so. Now that all was over, she turned in a very paltry way upon her ministers, and laid it upon them, professing to be very indignant at what they had done. Her secretary Davison she punished very severely, and never took into favour again. In so strange a way were the elements of grandeur and meanness mingled in her character.

24. As soon as Mary was dead, the next heir to the throne was her son James, the King of Scotland; but as he, unlike his mother, was a Protestant, the Roman Catholics both in England and abroad had no wish to see him king. Philip of Spain now once more saw an opportunity of reviving his old claims to be King of England himself.

25. He was at this time engaged in a war with his Protestant subjects in the Low Countries, to whom he and the Duke of

**Philip of
Spain pre-
pares to
invade
England.**

Alva, and the Inquisition, had been so intolerably cruel that they had risen in revolt. They looked to the English Protestants for help. Elizabeth did help them a little, but in so half-hearted, insincere, and niggardly a way that she drove them and her own ministers to despair. Her treatment of these brave people is a far darker blot on her name than the execution of Mary Stuart. Nevertheless, as she did to a certain extent support them, Philip determined to invade England. The long rivalry between him and Elizabeth came to a crisis; and in the struggle the whole world saw at last what Englishmen were made of; for it was in truth "not by might, not by power," but by their gallant spirit that the proud foe was kept off our shores.

26. Philip had a fine army, headed by a splendid general, the Prince of Parma, already assembled in the Low Countries. This army was to come to England and conquer the country; but as they had only flat-bottomed boats and barges, which could not fight, to transport them, it was necessary that a fleet of men-of-war should come and protect them against the English sailors. Philip began to prepare his fleet, which was the proudest and finest the world had ever seen.

LECTURE XLV.—GLORIANA.

The Spanish Armada. The English fleet. The English sailors. The conflict. England's triumph. Literature. Shakespeare and the theatre. Death of Elizabeth.

1. THE Invincible Armada, as Philip's fleet was proudly named, consisted of 130 ships, sixty-five of which were called galleons, and looked like floating castles, they were so tall and strong; four of them more gigantic still were called **The Spanish fleet.** "galliasse." They were provided with 2500 cannon, and vast stores of provisions; they were commanded by all the best naval officers of Spain, and contained also great numbers of the young nobility, who looked on the invasion of heretic England as a holy war, a sort of Crusade. But all this great show had a canker hid in its heart. Down below the decks were more than 2000 miserable slaves, chained to their oars, working with no heart, no courage, under the eye of a ruthless master, armed with a terrible whip of bull's hide.

2. When the English knew that the King of Spain was coming to invade their country, to drive away their queen and make himself king, their hearts all rose as the heart of one man. The government appealed first to the Lord **1588.** Mayor of London. They sent to inquire of him what force the city would furnish in defence of the kingdom. The mayor and common council, in return, desired to know what force the queen's Highness wished them to furnish. The answer was, fifteen ships and 5000 men. Two days after, the Londoners "humbly entreated the council, in sign of their perfect love and loyalty to prince and country, to accept 10,000 men and thirty ships amply furnished." The Catholics were as loyal as the Protestants; they forgot their divisions now, and only remembered they were Englishmen.

3. Still the English fleet was but a small one; the queen's navy consisted of only thirty ships; about fifty others, many of

The English fleet. them belonging to private individuals, joined the admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, at Plymouth Harbour. These ships were very different from the stately Spanish vessels. Far the greater number of them were about the size of yachts; there were only four large ships, and those were hardly as large as the smallest of the galleons.

4. But who had they got on board? The most splendid, the boldest, the most brilliant sailors that ever sailed the sea. The English sailors at this time were the wonder of the world. They were everywhere: up in the frozen ocean of the North, trying to find a way to India in that direction; down in the dangerous straits by Terra del Fuego; out on the great Pacific Ocean, bringing home wonderful stories of their adventures; strange new plants and birds; great stores of gold which they took from the Spanish ships; above all, a spirit of daring and enterprise which would fear nothing and nobody. The most famous of them all was Sir Francis Drake, who had really done what Columbus hoped to do, sailed all round the world. The Spaniards knew his name well. He had already done things which would have seemed mad if they had not succeeded. They came to think he was a devil, and no man. He was there, too, with a crew of little ships which were all devoted to him.

5. The English army was set in readiness also, to dispute every inch of ground, in case the invaders should succeed in landing. A strong camp was formed at Tilbury to protect the capital, and thither went Elizabeth, to encourage and cheer her soldiers. All that was noble and queenly in her rose to this emergency. **The queen and the army.** She was warned by some of her counsellors to beware of treachery. But "no," said the queen, "I do not desire to live to mistrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear; I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects." She knew she had but the body of a woman. "But," said she, "I have the heart of a king, and of a King of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realms."

6. The soldiers would have shed the last drop of their blood for such a queen; but they were never called to fight at all. Not one Spaniard set foot on English ground but as a prisoner.

The conflict. The conflict between the two fleets reminds one of David and Goliath. The great towering ships must

at first have despised the little ones. They had to sail all up the Channel till they came to Dunkirk, where Parma's army was waiting for them. The little English fleet, which was lying in the harbour of Plymouth, let them pass, and then came out after them. The Spanish admiral wanted to close upon the English, to bring them to a definite engagement and crush them. But the Englishmen knew better. The great ships moved slowly and clumsily, nor did they know their way very well; they could get no pilots in England, of course, and the Dutch pilots, who were well acquainted with the Channel, were Protestants, and would not come. The little English ships moved so lightly and were so cleverly handled that they seemed as if they were alive. A Spaniard said that "the swiftest ships in the Armada seemed to be at anchor" in comparison with the dashing English vessels. It was just the same with the cannon. The English fired four shots to the Spaniards' one; and their shot were well aimed and took effect, while the Spanish flew wildly up in the air, or down in the sea, doing no harm.

7. The Spaniards began to be afraid; they had never seen anything like it. They tried hard to close and grapple, but they never could catch the English. So they went up the Channel towards Dover, the English behind harassing and tormenting them. As they went on, the young English lords and gentlemen, Catholics as well as Protestants, came streaming out from every port, in any boat they could get hold of, to join the English fleet. From Lyme and Weymouth, from Poole and the Isle of Wight they came, ever more and more. The Spanish admiral one evening could count 100 sail behind him, and thought the number was still increasing.

8. At last the Spaniards reached Calais; by this time there were 140 English vessels. At night Howard sent six fire-ships among them, which terrified and confounded them still more. They tried to move on, and the English pursued them. The next day, from eight in the morning until sunset, the English poured their shot upon the Spanish vessels like rain.

9. In this terrible week three great galleons had been sunk, and three more disabled; 4000 men had been killed; the rest were cowed and disheartened. What was to be done? The Spaniards gave up all thought of invading England, of joining Parma's army; all they could think of was how to get back to Spain.

10. There was no going back; the dreadful little English fleet was still behind them, following them like a shadow. All

they could determine on was to go forward, sail round the Orkneys and west of Ireland, and reach Spain in that way. But very, very few of them ever got back to Spain. If the Queen of England had not been incredibly mean and niggardly, Howard and Drake would have followed them till they were all destroyed or captured; but Elizabeth kept them so short of powder and shot, and so short of food, that when they had pursued them as far as the Forth they had to turn back and leave them.

11. But now they had a worse enemy than even the English to confront. When they arrived in those northern latitudes,

The end. terrible storms overtook them. The great ships could hardly make their way; they were separated from one another by fogs; they scarcely knew where they were. The sailors were falling sick and dying by hundreds from cold and misery. When they came on the coast of Ireland, which is frightfully dangerous and rocky, it was still worse. Their supply of water was nearly all gone. If they attempted to land, even to get fresh water, the savage Irish set on them and butchered them without mercy. It is horrible to read of their misery. At last, in September and October, a few wretched shattered ships began to appear on the coast of Spain. Day after day they came dropping in, laden with sick and dying men. Fifty-four in all came home; and so ended the great Spanish Armada, and the long rivalry between Philip and Elizabeth.

12. The joy and thankfulness of the English nation knew no bounds. The queen went in state to St. Paul's to return thanks for the great deliverance, with the flags of the con-

**England's
Joy.**

quered enemy borne in triumph before her. The Protestants abroad shared in the joy of England. The dreadful power, the awful weight of Philip and Spain, which had so long impended over them was gone for ever. The brave little provinces of the Netherlands, which had held out so long, but which it seems must have been overmatched and crushed at last, were free; for England, the mainstay of their cause, was free. More than free; she was now, what she has been ever since, the mistress of the seas. Well might Spenser say that

"Albion the sonne of Neptune was."

She could carry her commerce and plant her colonies wherever she pleased, in the Old World or the New. She felt her power,

and her spirit and confidence rose gloriously. She thought "the Lord had fought for her."

Never was Lady so praised, so honoured, so worshipped as Elizabeth.

"All princely graces
That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,
With all the virtues that attend the good,
Shall still be doubled on her; truth shall nurse her,
Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her.

In her days, every man shall eat in safety
Under his own vine what he plants, and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours:
God shall be truly known, and those about her
From her shall read the perfect ways of honour."

So wrote Shakespeare; and Spenser—

"Fairer and nobler liveth none this hour,
Ne like in grace, ne like in learned skill;
Therefore they Glorian call that glorious flower;
Long mayst thou, Glorian, live in glory and great power!"

If we must call this flattery, surely it was flattery that any queen, any woman, might be proud of.

13. Full of patriotism, of triumph, of noble joy, this was the time when England's most glorious literature came into life. Now were written the books she is proudest of in all her history. In the "golden days of good Queen Literature. Bess" there were chroniclers, and travellers, and divines, all eager to tell what they had read, and seen, and thought; above all, there were poets who read and saw and thought also, but who, by the glow of their own hearts, felt a life and soul in history, a tender and awful beauty in nature, a vastness and mystery in the heart and fate of man, and in his relations to his Maker, which enlarged the spiritual world in which we dwell more than ever Columbus had enlarged the natural one.

14. To know what the poets of Elizabeth's age did for England and for the world, we must read the books they wrote. Every one knows their names, Shakespeare, and Spenser, and Sydney; but who knows much of what they did and thought? There are others too whose names are not so famous, but who took their part, Green, Marlowe, Drayton, and many others; for this wonderful literary activity went on all through Elizabeth's reign. It was while she was queen that the first public theatre was opened. Little by little the old religious plays, the Mysteries and Miracles, which had been so popular in the middle ages, gave way to the tragedies

1576.
The theatre.

and comedies of real life, and most people would now be shocked and pained to see sacred subjects brought upon the stage. There is still a lingering remnant of the old religious drama in what is now almost the least serious or instructive of all our exhibitions, the Christmas Pantomime. The ridiculous Pantaloon and Harlequin which delight the children's eyes are descended from the Devil and the Vice, who took parts, and generally grotesque or comic parts, in the old mysteries.

15. The early theatres were very different from ours; there was no gaslight, no fine shifting scenery, no pictured back-grounds. The curtain was a blanket stretched across the front. When the scene changed a board was hung out to say, This is London, or This is Rome, or Bohemia, or France. A great deal was left to the imagination of the spectators and the good acting of the performers. (Shakespeare himself, it is said, was not a good actor; his best part was the Ghost in *Hamlet*.)

16. The queen was fond of theatrical representations. Whenever she went to visit a nobleman, or a city, or a university, there would be a play or a pageant to welcome her. Sometimes it would be what is called a masque, where beautiful music, singing, and dancing were added to the acting. But the glory and crown of all were the plays of Shakespeare, and Shakespeare. in them both Elizabeth and her people delighted. Every one could find in them something which would suit the fashion of his mind, and raise it to its highest strain. There was a great deal about the history and glory of England which everybody liked. There were lovely ladies and gallant heroes, there were philosophers and deep thinkers, there were priests and hermits, rogues and clowns, there were dainty fairies and awful ghosts, there were fun and wit, joy and love, there were sorrow, pity, and despair. All of the very highest, and deepest, and truest. Was it not really a new world, of which he held the golden key?

17. With all this activity of the intellect and imagination, practical work was not forgotten. It was in the latter part of

Elizabeth's reign that a serious attempt was made to improve the condition of the poor. It has been already remarked that the breaking up of the monasteries had cut off a great deal of the charity and assistance on which they had been used to depend. Not only were a great many idle people now driven to beg or steal if they would not work, but many poor, and sick, and aged, to whom the monks and nuns had been kind, were left comfortless. Elizabeth's

ministers, whilst they were very severe upon the vagabonds, even putting them to death in great numbers, did their best to help and protect the unfortunate. It was they who first introduced a "poor rate," something like the one which we have now; and which, whatever faults it may have, does succour the widow, the orphan, the sick, and the infirm in the troubles which must otherwise quite overwhelm them.

18. The defeat of the Armada was the highest point of Elizabeth's glory. Her later years were saddened and lonely. Her great favourite, the Earl of Leicester, the only man whom perhaps she really loved, died in the midst of the rejoicings. Though she was now growing old, she soon after made another favourite of the young Earl of Essex.

**The Earl
of Essex.**

Essex was accomplished, high-spirited, and warm-hearted; he had a rare gift of winning love and admiration. Spenser, to whom he was a generous friend, calls him the "faire branch of Honour, Flower of Chivalrie." Elizabeth ever loved what was gracious, gay, and gallant; but her partiality for the chivalrous young earl did him harm rather than good. He was placed in positions far above his abilities, and requiring qualities which he did not possess—caution, patience, and resolution. He was sent as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, where the people were again rebelling, and where a wise and firm ruler was much needed. Essex,

1599.

"Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,"

was neither wise nor firm; he did not know what to do, and having made an inglorious and useless peace, he returned home. Here he behaved so foolishly and imprudently that he was charged with high treason, found guilty, and beheaded. Elizabeth never could rally from this shock.

1601.

She was almost seventy years old; she had no near relations; her old counsellors and ministers, so faithful, wise, and patient, were all dead; she was quite lonely and forlorn. She grew moody and suspicious, and her heart, she said, "was sad and heavy."

19. When she was dying they tried to induce her to say who should succeed her. She made some indistinct sign, which they thought meant James of Scotland. The Archbishop of Canterbury, kneeling by her side, said some prayers which seemed to bring her comfort, and so died the last of the Tudors, the queen of whom England had been so proud.

1603.
**Death of
Elizabeth.**

LECTURE XLVI.—JAMES OF SCOTLAND.

The Stuarts. The divine right of kings. James and the Church of England. The Puritans and the Romanists. The pilgrim fathers. Gunpowder Treason.

1. Now at last the ancient prophecy seemed to be fulfilled, a Scotch king was seated on the sacred stone, and crowned King of England at Westminster. After all the fighting and discord of so many hundred years, we may say that Edward I.'s will was accomplished, and one man was king over the whole island; and yet, too, Bruce's will was satisfied, for Scotland was free and unconquered still. She indeed gave the king to all. Had but the king she gave been at all like Bruce, or like Edward! But the new monarch was no very kingly man, and the House of Stuart was the most unfortunate and the most unbearable of all the different royal lines which England ever had. There is indeed a sort of romance about some of them, which makes their history fascinating; but there was nothing of the sort about James I.

2. The descriptions one reads of him are more ridiculous than romantic. "Nature and education," writes Macaulay, "had done their best to produce a finished specimen of all that a king ought not to be." Then he tells of "his awkward figure, his rolling eye, his rickety walk, his nervous tremblings. . . . The most ridiculous weaknesses seemed to meet in this wretched Solomon of Whitehall; pedantry, buffoonery, garrulity, low curiosity, the most contemptible personal cowardice." One can hardly believe this was the son of the beautiful and enchanting Mary.

3. James certainly had a respectable amount of talent and intelligence, but he had no dignity, no majesty either of character or demeanour. Though he was particularly fond of theological studies, and even wrote some books on those subjects; though he had a new edition, and in part a new translation of the English Bible published, and is very highly complimented in the preface as being "a most tender and loving nursing father to the

Church," yet his private life was very immoral, and his court was utterly disgraceful. Some of the best poets of his time, who could write very beautifully, yet, when they imitated the manners and talk of James's courtiers, produced plays which are so shameless and coarse and base that it would be a disgrace to look at them.

4. He and all the Stuarts had as much love of arbitrary government as the Tudors, but they had not what the Tudors had, the gift of seeing and understanding when they might have their own way and when they must yield. When the masterful Elizabeth saw that her will clashed with the will of the nation, she could be wise and give in; but the Stuarts never did or could see that. It was in their time that the great struggle came, and once and for ever it was shown to all kings and to all people that England was a free country, whose kings must rule according to the laws and the will of the people, or they should not rule at all. It was a hard struggle, and cost one of the Stuarts his life and another his throne, but it was fought to the end, and will never have to be fought again.

5. James I., though he was borne with, and died peaceably, king both of England and Scotland, began the contest, little guessing what he was doing. He was a strict Protestant, for, having been separated from his mother all his life, he had been brought up by the Scotch Reformers. The Scotch had gone a great deal farther in their reformation than the English had done. They hated a great many things which the Church of England approved, such as for the clergymen to wear a white surplice, or to make the sign of the cross in baptism; they disliked, indeed, the whole English Liturgy. But most of all they objected to bishops and archbishops; they believed that the Church ought only to be governed by presbyters, or priests, and that all bishops were unlawful. The greater part of the Scotch people hold the same opinion now, and the Established Church of Scotland is called the Presbyterian because they have no bishops, but only presbyters. The word "presbyter" is taken from a Greek word meaning "elder," and our word "priest" is only the same shortened down.

6. When James, however, came to England, he at once attached himself heartily to the Episcopal Church, and the bishops attached themselves to him. The Church of England had already begun to alter a good deal from what Cranmer and Ridley had left it; and though they had not drawn nearer to Rome, for they were

James and
the Church
of England.

as strongly set against the Pope as ever, they had to a certain extent returned towards some of the Romish doctrines.

Instead of thinking, like the Presbyterians, that it was wicked to have any bishops, they considered that no Church could be a Church at all without bishops. They believed that mystical and supernatural powers had descended to them from the apostles, and that no clergyman was properly a clergyman who had not been ordained by the laying on of their hands. They fell back a little, too, to favouring the celibacy of the clergy; they did all they could to make the Church service more ornamental, by handsome vestments, painted windows, and other decorations. Thus they and the Puritans drew farther and farther apart. The same parties still continue to exist in England. There are the High Church, or Ritualists; there are the Low Church, who are more like what the Puritans used to be; and there are various bodies of Dissenters or Nonconformists, who are also like them in some ways. But now they can all live side by side very peaceably, instead of wishing to cut off each others' ears or heads, as they did then.

7. The king and the Church were very closely bound together. The Church began to hold and teach the doctrine of the divine right of kings, which it is said James I. invented. **The divine right of kings.** They said that whatever sort of man a king might be, however he governed or misgoverned, it was the true and lawful heir by right of his birth, being the eldest son, or descended from the eldest son, of the last king, he was appointed by God king of the land, and no Christian might oppose him or depose him. This doctrine is evidently quite contrary to the whole history of England, in the entire course of which no king was crowned till he had sworn to obey the laws, to govern justly, and protect the rights and liberty of his subjects. If he broke his vow he was either brought to reason, and compelled to amend, or he was got rid of in one way or another. Nor is this doctrine to be found in the Bible. As Macaulay points out, we should perhaps judge from that that *younger* sons, not *elder* ones, were the favourites of Heaven. Jacob was not the eldest son of Isaac, nor Judah of Jacob, nor David of Jesse, nor Solomon of David.

8. This doctrine, however, became the favourite doctrine of the High Church party, and the kings, on their part, favoured and protected the Church and the bishops with all their power. And between them they dealt with the Puritans in a very high-handed way. We have a specimen in the answer James gave to some remon-

**Treatment
of the
Puritans.**

strance about the use of the surplice, and the signing of the cross in baptism. "If, after the gospel's preaching forty-five years among you, there be any yet unsatisfied, I doubt it proceeds rather out of stubbornness of opinion than out of tenderness of conscience, and therefore let them conform themselves, or else they shall hear farther of it." Hearing farther of it generally meant fines and imprisonment.

9. The Puritans being greatly oppressed, and not even allowed to meet quietly for prayer and preaching in private houses, began to think of leaving the country altogether. They cast their eyes across the sea. By this time a great many Englishmen had been to America, and had perceived how excellent a land it would be for English colonists. The English sailors were always bringing home wonderful stories of the Indies, as they were still called. The Puritans resolved to seek liberty there; and though the government strove to prevent their leaving the country, some of the most resolute among them sailed away over the

Atlantic in a little vessel called the May-flower. They gave up the native land which they dearly loved, their homes, their friends, all that they had, and they landed on a wild, rough, desolate coast of North America, seeking what was dearer to them than any earthly thing, "freedom to worship God." They named their adopted country "New England," with a loving thought of the old England they had left behind. These brave men, the "Pilgrim Fathers," as we call them, were the founders of the great American nation. More and more followed them, as they could, looking on America as a sort of promised land. The government, which would give them no peace while they stayed in England, always opposed their going away. In the next reign, when a party of Puritans were making ready to follow their brethren, the government interfered, and entirely prevented their departure. Among this party were Pym, Hampden, and Oliver Cromwell, and, as Hume drily remarks, "the king had full leisure afterwards to repent this exercise of his authority."

1620.
The Pilgrim
Fathers.

10. One of the most enterprising of the travellers who brought home tales from America was Sir Walter Raleigh, a gallant and chivalrous man, who had been a great favourite with Queen Elizabeth, and had named one of the new-found states "Virginia," in her honour. Besides his stories of adventure, he brought to England what has proved far more useful and valuable than all the gold of Mexico, the potato, which helps so largely now in the food of rich and poor. He

Sir Walter
Raleigh.

also introduced a more questionable novelty—tobacco (“divine tobacco” his friend Spenser calls it); and the story is well-known of how his servant, for the first time seeing his master smoking, threw a bucket of water over him, supposing him to be on fire. James I. thought the smoking of tobacco a detestable custom, and wrote a book against it, but he could not prevent the new luxury from becoming very popular. James was very cruel and unjust to Sir Walter Raleigh; he imprisoned him on a supposed charge of treason, and kept him for many years in the Tower, where Raleigh beguiled his time in writing, or beginning to write, ‘The History of the World.’ Prince Henry, James’s eldest son, who had more sympathy and a gentler mind than his father, felt great shame at Raleigh’s treatment, and wondered how his

1617. father “could keep such a bird in such a cage.” Raleigh at last ended his life on the scaffold, grieved and lamented over by every one.

11. James, having become what we may call an English High Churchman, was not content with persecuting the Puritans. He was just as rigorous with the Roman Catholics. They perhaps hoped that, as they had always sided with his mother Mary, he would be more indulgent to them than Elizabeth had been, but they found themselves quite mistaken. And it must have made a deep impression on the minds of the people of England to observe the contrast between them and the Puritans in their way of meeting the hard treatment of the government. The Puritans attempted to go quietly away; the Catholics made plots and conspiracies. They had already been quite accustomed to this mode of action during the days of Elizabeth, and had been encouraged in it by Pope and priests. Now they began again. It was early in the reign of James I. that the most famous of all their plots, the “Gunpowder Treason,” was devised.

12. It was a deep-laid plot, and was darkly brooding for many months before it was discovered. The object was, as the conspirators hoped, to get rid of all their enemies at one stroke, by blowing up the House of Parliament on the day of its assembling. The king would be there in state to open the session; with him would be his eldest son, Prince Henry. They and all the lords, the bishops, and the commons would be destroyed at once; one of the younger princes should then be proclaimed king, and educated as a Roman Catholic. The plot was very nearly brought to perfection. The barrels of gunpowder were laid in readiness

1604.
Gunpowder
Plot.

The Roman-
ists.

under the Parliament House, hidden under piles of faggots. A fearless and fanatical man stood ready to light the fatal train. We seem to see him now in the low doorway, with his slow matches, his tinder, and his dark lantern, just as he was seized in the dead of night—the night before the appointed day.

13. The conspiracy had been discovered. One of the traitors, a Northamptonshire gentleman named Tresham, had felt some relentings towards his brother-in-law, Lord Monteagle, who would be sure to be in his place in the House of Lords, and would perish with the rest. He wrote him a strange anonymous letter, in a feigned hand, hinting at some terrible blow which the parliament would receive, and warning him, as he tendered his life, to keep away. This letter, being shown to the king and his ministers, led to the discovery of the plot before it was too late. Guy Fawkes was seized in the cellar; the rest of the conspirators were pursued, and either died in defending themselves, or were taken, tried, and executed.

14. This Gunpowder Treason seemed to have something specially demoniacal about it. The very darkness and mystery, the terribleness of a sudden explosion which would give no warning before all was over, the awful cruelty of involving so many innocent people in the punishment which was supposed to be due to the guilty, and its having so very nearly succeeded, struck the whole nation with horror, and remains still one of the most vivid memories in the imagination of the people. Still it is only just to remark that eighty men at most knew of its existence, and it would be entirely wrong to lay it on the Roman Catholics in general, most of whom probably thought it quite as wicked as we do.

15. It is well worth notice, however, that the conspirators believed themselves to be engaged in a noble and sacred work. One of them, a gentleman of high character and unblemished reputation, Sir Everard Digby, wrote to his wife, after his condemnation: "Now for my intention; let me tell you that if I had thought there had been the least sin in the plot I would not have been in it for all the world; and no other cause drew me to hazard my fortune and my life but zeal to God's religion." So utterly can religious bigotry blind the eyes of the soul and deaden the voice of conscience and humanity.

It is said that Digby and some of the others, notably Guy Fawkes, died very penitently and devoutly.

LECTURE XLVII.—THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT.

The royal prerogative. The parliament. Charles I. The Cavaliers and the Roundheads. Strafford and Laud. Ship-money. Hampden. The Prayer-book in Scotland.

1. It was not only in religious matters that James showed his arbitrary spirit, and alienated many of his people. He wished to be supreme in all points, and to have the authority of Henry VIII. without having the character of Henry VIII. The exact power which lawfully belonged to the king was not at that time very clearly defined, nor can it be said to be so now. The royal prerogative is a sort of shadowy thing, which seems in theory to be very great, but which in a country like ours shrinks up into almost nothing, unless the sovereign and the nation are of one mind. The Tudors had felt this by instinct, if they did not know it; but the Stuarts neither felt it nor knew it.

2. Just about this period, in other countries as well as our own, the monarchs became more despotic than they had ever been yet; in some of them the last traces of liberty disappeared. The kings of Spain became utter tyrants. In France, too, the national assemblies of the people ceased, and the king and nobles did just as they pleased, without any check upon them. But we in England were better off, because our parliament never came to an end.

3. All through the reigns of the Tudors, it is true, the parliaments had been very meek and submissive, and had almost always done what the king or queen told them; but still they were there. Outwardly they had all their old powers and rights, and neither king nor queen ever professed to act without their consent. Under the Stuarts the parliaments quite left off being meek and submissive; they remembered their duties and their privileges, and stood up like men to defend them. They fell back on the right, which their predecessors had exercised so manfully in days of

old, and would give the king no money until he had redressed their grievances. Then the king in his turn fell back on the old plan of Edward IV., and tried to levy "benevolences." He could not have done much by force, even if he had desired it, because he had no army. Elizabeth's whole standing army is said to have consisted of 100 beef-eaters, and James had no chance of getting more.

4. Things went on very ill in many ways. James, like so many other kings, made favourites, and favourites whom the nation could not respect. The principal one was George Villiers, who was afterwards made Duke of Buckingham, but whom the king always called Steenie, because he thought him like a picture he had seen of the martyr Stephen. "Steenie" does not seem to have had anything else at all saint-like about him, and his principal recommendations were that he danced and dressed beautifully. He treated the king with the greatest familiarity and insolence, which seemed to please James, but disgusted the nation.

**The Duke
of Buck-
ingham.**

5. But a far more sad and shameful thing than the follies of a worthless courtier occurred during this reign—the disgrace of the most eminent man in the whole kingdom; one of the greatest men indeed whom England has ever produced. This was the famous Lord Bacon, who was Lord Chancellor of England, but whose great fame rests upon his writings and his studies more than on his high position. He has been long looked on as the father of modern science, though it is now supposed by some eminent writers that his work has been somewhat overrated. He carried on the ideas of his great old namesake, Roger Bacon, by teaching men to observe nature, and to learn from her instead of busying themselves with words and phrases of their own manufacture.

**Lord
Bacon.**

6. That he had grand thoughts and clothed them in noble words is certain, but that neither thoughts nor words could help him to live a noble life is unfortunately as certain. No one knew better than he what was the duty of a judge. Most of his great books were written in Latin, but one was in English, a little book of essays, which are full of wise thoughts, very simply expressed, about matters of constant and practical interest. They are about envy, truth, death, parents and children, marriage and single life. One is about "judicature." It shows that he had reflected gravely on the responsibilities of a judge's office. "The place of justice," he wrote, "is an hallowed place; and

therefore not only the bench, but the foot pace and precincts thereof, ought to be preserved without scandal and corruption." "Judges should imitate God, in whose place they sit." Yet the man who wrote this, the highest judge in the land, was charged

1620. with taking bribes! a hundred pounds from one; three or four hundred pounds from another; was found guilty, owned the justice of the charge with shame and penitence, and was degraded from his high office by the king and parliament. Truly "it is a good divine that follows his own instructions."

Still in his case we seem to have quite reversed the saying that "the evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." And for the sake of his grand works as a philosopher and a writer his name is held in honour, and his faults and infirmities pardoned or forgotten.

7. James continued to go contrary to the wishes of his people in most matters to the end of his reign. They earnestly desired him to help the cause of the Protestants abroad. His own daughter Elizabeth, who was so gracious and beautiful that she was called the Queen of Hearts, had married a Protestant German prince, the Elector Palatine Frederic, who was afterwards elected

1620. King of Bohemia. He was in great need of help and support; but though the country implored James to take his part, he would not do so.

8. Worse than that, in the eyes of the English, he actually wished to make friends with Spain. He seemed to forget all the past,—all the cruelty of Philip, all the dread of the Armada, and the triumph and deliverance of England,—and wished to marry his son to a Spanish princess. His eldest son, Henry, having died very young, the second, Charles, became heir to the throne, and it was proposed that he should take a Spanish wife. The people writhed under the very idea; but that did not seem of much importance. Charles and the favourite Buckingham went off in

1623. disguise to Spain, but on their way thither, passing through Paris, Charles saw a French princess who attracted him. Nevertheless, he went on and saw the Spanish princess also; he tricked and played with the Spaniards, making them believe that he fully intended to marry her; but as soon as he returned to England he broke off the match.

9. This insincerity and deceit did not promise very well for the honour of the future King of England, but the people were so delighted to be freed from the fear of a Spanish queen that they were inclined to overlook all that was bad in their prince's

conduct, and were willing for him to marry the French princess, Henrietta Maria. But before he had actually done so his father died, and he became king as Charles I.

10. The new king was a great contrast to his father. James was paltry and contemptible in his looks and manners; Charles was very royal, dignified, and handsome. He was every inch a gentleman; he was also a scholar and
 1625.
 Charles I.
 (in his own way) a Christian. His private character too was unlike James's; he was pure in life, a faithful husband, and a loving father. We seem to know his beautiful and melancholy face very well from the portraits which he left behind him. So now the romantic element comes in. Had he been vulgar, undignified, and clownish, there would not have been nearly such discordant opinions about him and his character. His greatest fault was that he never could be trusted to keep his promises; he was fond of bidding parliament rely on his "royal word," but he was not at all particular as to observing that "royal word."

11. He had already in his love-making shown a specimen of this fatal defect in his character. The new French queen, and still more her attendants, soon became very distasteful to the nation, chiefly on account of their
 The
 queen.
 religion. It was believed that some of the Catholic priests who had followed the queen from France "had not only practised with the Pope on the one side, and the English Papists on the other, but had had intelligence also with the Spaniard." There is a very amusing letter about these French attendants of the queen, written at the time, and giving an account of their dismissal. The priests who attended on her, says the writer, "were the most superstitious, turbulent, and Jesuited priests that could be found in all France, very fit to make firebrands of sedition in a foreign state." The king found it necessary to order all these "hypocritical dogs," besides great numbers of ladies and servants, to quit the country. When it was made known that they were to go away, "the women howled and lamented, as if they were going to execution," and the queen, it was said, "grew very impatient, and brake the glass windows with her fist;" but it was all in vain, Charles held his own; and though he rewarded them handsomely, they had to go. He
 1626.
 knew very well how to be peremptory, and could use language, at this period, at least, not quite befitting a "royal saint." Witness this letter of his, entirely in his own hand, to the Duke of Buckingham, "for the final driving away of the Monsieurs."

"STEENIE,

"I have received your letter by Dic Græme; this is my answer. I command you to send all the French away to-morrow out of the town. If you can, by fair means (but stick not long in disputing); otherwise force them away, driving them away like so many wild beasts, until ye have shipped them, and so the devil go with them. Let me hear no answer but of the performance of my command."

12. But though the Frenchmen went away, they did not take all the troubles away with them. Charles's reign was almost all taken up with strife between himself and his supporters on one side, and the parliament and their supporters on the other. The two great parties into which they gradually formed themselves came to be called the Cavaliers and the Roundheads; afterwards they received the names of Whigs and Tories, and they were, we may say, the fathers of what we now call the Conservatives, and the Radicals or Liberals; only that now those two parties are far nearer together and less unlike than they were then, and instead of war to the knife, they oppose one another when necessary in a lawful and constitutional manner, by electing members of parliament, who discuss, and argue, and vote in the House of Commons.

13. At this period they were drawing farther and farther apart, and became very widely different. Charles's party sounds the most attractive in tales, and looks the best in portraits. He had on his side nearly all the nobility, and the country gentlemen, men of birth and good breeding, faithful, loyal, devoted, and honourable. He had also the Church of England, the bishops and clergy, and the universities, nearly all of what are called the higher classes, and who were greatly afraid of lawlessness and the violence of the mob. The Cavaliers had a stately air, wore long hair, fine lace collars and ruffles, and looked aristocratic. There were, however, besides these, many gay young fellows of lower birth, who joined the king's party because they hated the strictness of the Puritans.

14. The other side comprised but few of the nobility and higher gentry; but nearly all the middle ranks, the merchants, the shopkeepers, and the country farmers or yeomen. The true hearts, the true religion, and love of liberty of these men were splendid and glorious, and for the lasting good of England, but they were not so attractive or imposing as the Cavaliers. Indeed, in some ways they had already

begun to make themselves ridiculous. They had not the good taste to avoid absurdity and exaggeration, nor the sense to see what points were of real consequence and what were not. They also began to read the Old Testament more than the New, and to think that all things which the Jews had done of old were the right things for Christians to do now ; thus they became fierce and vindictive. They called Sunday the Sabbath, and wished to have it observed as strictly as the Jews observed the seventh day. All sorts of harmless things they considered sinful. "It was a sin," says Macaulay, "to hang garlands on a May-pole, to drink a friend's health, to fly a hawk, to hunt a stag, to play at chess, to wear love-locks (as the long curls of the Cavaliers were called), to put starch into a ruff, to read the 'Fairy Queen.'" "To know whether a man was really godly was impossible. But it was easy to know whether he had a plain dress, lank hair, no starch in his linen, no gay furniture in his house, whether he talked through his nose and showed the whites of his eyes, whether he named his children Assurance, Tribulation, and Maher-shalal-hashbaz."

15. Even this is not exaggerated. They often changed their own names from Henry or Edward to such as they thought had a more pious sound, and would either choose a name out of the Old Testament, like Hezekiah or Habakkuk, or some religious word or phrase which was not even a name at all. There was one rather famous Puritan, soon after this time, named Praise-God Barebone ; and a list is given by Hume of the names of twelve men who were said to have served on one jury, among which were Accepted, Redeemed, Kill-sin, and Fight-the-good-fight-of-faith.

16. All this was very absurd and irritating, and their gloominess and strict severity were very unlike Christ's religion. But the true Puritans were great and grand men nevertheless. In the beginning they were less austere and more liberal. Our great poet Milton was one ; but he loved music, poetry, and art ; there was nothing narrow or sour about him ; and his face was as beautiful, as noble, as refined as Charles's own. The early leaders of the Puritan party, the party of freedom in the coming struggle, had none of that littleness or bitterness in their spirit ; they were country gentlemen, well-educated and well-born, who were representing their counties as members of parliament. The names of the most eminent were Eliot, Pym, and Hampden ; the two latter were among those whom Charles prevented from emigrating to America. Hampden was perhaps the noblest and most perfect of the Puritan gentlemen.

**The Puritan
leaders.**

17. Of the king's ministers, the most celebrated were a layman, Strafford, and an archbishop, Laud. Strafford, or Wentworth, as he was at first called, was a clever, strong, resolute man, who began by being on the side of the people, and opposing the tyranny of the king, but afterwards changed entirely, and was more arbitrary, fierce, and despotic than ever Charles himself would have been.

18. Laud was the head of the High Church party. He considered himself a strict Protestant, but other people thought that his great love of ritual and ceremonies would lead back to Rome by and bye. Fuller tells us of a lady (still living when he wrote his history) "who, turning Papist, and being demanded of the archbishop the cause of her changing her religion, tartly returned, 'My lord, it was because I ever hated a crowd.' And being desired to explain her meaning herein, 'I perceived,' said she, 'that your lordship and many others are making for Rome as fast as ye can, and therefore, to prevent a press, I went before you.'"

Of these chiefs of the rival parties, Eliot died in prison, Hampden was killed in battle; Strafford and Laud were beheaded. Very few of the eminent men of those old days came to a peaceful end.

19. The contest began at once, from the very first parliament in Charles's reign. The king wished for money; the commons wished the redress of grievances. They especially demanded the dismissal of the Duke of Buckingham, who was as great a favourite with Charles as he had been with his father. The king would not redress the grievances, nor would he give up Buckingham; the commons therefore refused to grant the money. Charles then dissolved the parliament, and tried to get money without their consent. He laid on taxes called tonnage and poundage (duties paid upon every tun of wine or pound of merchandise brought into the country from abroad) by his own authority, and he tried to force rich men to lend money. Many rich people, Hampden among them, refused to lend, and were put in prison. The poorer people who seemed inclined to resist were pressed into the fleet, or compelled to enter the army.

20. Still the king could not get nearly as much money as he wanted, especially as there was again a wretched little war with France going on; he was obliged to summon parliament once more, and to set the gentlemen whom he had imprisoned at liberty.

The parliament was again quite ready to give him money if he would redress their grievances, but not a shilling without.

He delayed and hung back as long as he could ; the parliament at last laid before him what is called the "Petition of Right," which was almost as important and as precious as Magna Charta itself. The principal things on which it insisted were, that the king should raise no taxes without the consent of the parliament, and that no man should be imprisoned except in a lawful way. Charles was as sorry to sign this as John had been to sign Magna Charta, but he was obliged to do it ; and the parliament then granted him a large sum of money.

1628.
The Petition
of Right.

21. Everything however went wrong ; the war was unsuccessful and inglorious ; and the Duke of Buckingham, who was at the head of it, was murdered in the streets of Portsmouth. The king lost no time in breaking all his promises, and went on raising money by the taxes of tonnage and poundage, without the consent of parliament, and in defiance of the "Petition of Right" which he had signed. Parliament then declared that whoever paid those taxes was an enemy to the liberties of England. The king forbade parliament to discuss the matter at all ; and when they refused to obey him, dissolved the House, and put some of the members in prison. One of these was Sir John Eliot, who never lived to come out again.

1629.

22. The king now determined to go on without parliament at all, and it was eleven years before they met again. Those were eleven terrible years of despotism and cruelty. There were two councils or courts which, though they had existed before, had not as yet done much mischief, but which now became the main instruments of tyranny, called the High Commission Court and the Star Chamber. They had the power of punishing anybody for what they called contempt of the king's authority, without any legal trial or fair means of defending himself. Strafford and Laud had all their own way. Laud looked after the religious affairs, and the Puritans were treated with pitiless cruelty. They were imprisoned, whipped, branded with red-hot irons ; their ears were cut off. They fled from the country when they could, though they were not even allowed to do that in peace.

The High
Commission
Court and
the Star
Chamber.

23. Strafford, on his part, gave his mind to the other department. He formed a great scheme, which he called by the expressive name of "Thorough." This scheme was to make the king absolute ; to put all the people, their liberty and their property, entirely in his power,

The scheme
"Thorough."

so that he might imprison or tax them just as he pleased ; to put his will above all the laws, and all the judges, and all the rights of the people. Being a wonderfully clever and strong-minded man, Strafford really went some way towards bringing his scheme to pass. He was for some time governor in the north of England, and he and his council at York defied the law and

1631. set up the royal power to such a point that it was as if Magna Charta had never existed. He went afterwards to Ireland, and did the same there.

24. But though he had appeared to succeed so far, he felt that there was one weak point still. He or the king might oppress to such an extent that at last the people would rise and rebel. He knew how often this had happened already in England. And if they did, if—all classes being equally oppressed—all should rebel, what then? The king had no army; the hundred beef-eaters or a few household guards would not avail much against a nation in arms. In France, where the king was now quite despotic, he had a standing army at his back. Strafford saw that to make his scheme "Thorough" work, the king must have an army too. But here was a great difficulty. For a standing army is a very expensive thing, and the king could get no money.

The Crown lawyers and Strafford between them thought of what seemed a very clever expedient. They dared not make any new taxes, so they fell back upon a very old one; so old, however, and so altered by them, that it almost seemed new.

25. In former times, when there was danger of invasion, and before the nation had a regular fleet, the government had been used to call on the counties and large towns on the sea-coast to provide ships to defend the country. Sometimes, if these towns had no ships ready or to spare, the king would take money from them instead and fit out ships himself. Strafford and others determined to try this old

1637. plan again. But there was a wide difference between what they did and the old plan. Ships or ship-money had never been asked for except in times of war, and now it was a time of peace. Nor had it ever been asked for except from the places on the coast; now it was demanded from all the inland counties too. Moreover, ship-money had never been wanted except for getting ships; now it was not for getting ships at all. The king was to do what he pleased with it; and the thing which he would please to do would, no doubt, be to raise an army.

26. This was a very terrible state of things; the whole country was alarmed and indignant. Some brave men, and notably

Hampden, who lived in Buckinghamshire, a long way from the sea, had the courage to refuse to pay. **Hampden.** It was a very small sum which was demanded from him, not more than a few shillings; but he saw how great a matter was at stake; nothing less than the whole liberty of England. His cause was tried before twelve judges; but judges at this time were almost tools of the king, who could set them up and put them down at his pleasure; and the majority gave judgment against Hampden. Even of those twelve, however, five were opposed to the king, and only seven were on his side, so that the decision was looked on almost as a victory to Hampden. He was honoured and admired more than ever by the people, and more and more indignation was felt against the king and Strafford.

27. As if the king had not yet done mischief enough by alienating the people of England by his tyranny and broken promises, he now turned and exasperated Scotland. It was not by unjust taxes this time, but by an **Charles and the Scotch.** aggression which they resented still more deeply, an attack on their religion. We saw how far the Scotch Protestants had carried the Reformation; they detested the Church of England and its bishops nearly as bitterly as the Church of Rome and its Pope. They put Popery and Prelacy together, and they hated the English prayer-book, the communion-service, the surplice, &c. most vehemently. Just at this moment Charles and Archbishop Laud determined to compel the Scotch to use the liturgy and ceremonies of England in all their churches.

28. The Scotch, who had always been a turbulent and ungovernable people, and who saw with great jealousy their Scotch kings turning into Englishmen, and Scotland sinking as they feared into a sort of province to England, resented this last insult and aggression more than all. They broke out into insurrection, just as the Devonshire Catholics **1638.** had done, on the same provocation. The rising began on a Sunday—the first Sunday when the prayer-book was to be read in the church. “No sooner was the book opened by the Dean of Edinburgh,” it is Phillips, Milton’s nephew, who tells the story, “but a number of the meaner sort, with clapping of their hands, and outcries, made a great uproar; and one of them called Jane or Janot Gaddis (yet living at the writing of this relation) flung a little folding-stool whereon she sat at the dean’s head, saying, ‘Out, thou false thief! dost thou say the mass at my lug (ear).’ Which was followed with so great noise” that

the service could not go on at all. "All Edinburgh, all Scotland, and behind that all England and Ireland," says Carlyle, "rose into unappeasable commotion on the flight of this stool of Jenny's."

29. The king tried to put down the rebellion, but he could not succeed. He had not soldiers enough, and he had not money enough. He and Strafford could see no alternative before them but, after the eleven years they had had their own way, to call a parliament again; they dared not make any more attempts to raise taxes illegally, lest England should flame up as Scotland had done.

30. But when parliament met, and showed ever so mildly a desire to have their grievances, all the bitter grievances of those eleven years, looked into, the king, who could never learn wisdom, or see that he was walking over a mine of gunpowder, sent them about their business. He tried once more to govern at his pleasure, and even more tyrannically still. Ship-money was levied with increased rigour; soldiers were enlisted by force. But these soldiers did him no good; they were more inclined to side with the nation, and did not wish to fight the Scotch. Everything went so ill with him that he was obliged to summon another parliament—his last. This was the famous

1640.

"Long Parliament."

LECTURE XLVIII.—THE CIVIL WAR.

The Long Parliament. The five members. The war begins. Oliver Cromwell. His army. Trial and execution of the king. The military despotism. Battle of Worcester.

1. WHEN the parliament first met all the members seem to have been of one mind. The government had been so flagrantly oppressive and tyrannical that no one attempted to defend it. They all set vigorously to work to restore freedom. The king could make no head against them at all. Those odious courts, the High Commission, the Star Chamber, the Council of York, were abolished at once; ship-money was declared illegal, and it was decreed that no interval of more than three years should ever elapse between parliament and parliament. Next they resolved to punish the tyrants. Not that they yet thought of punishing the king; no one dreamt of that; but they were determined to get rid of those who had helped and advised him, especially of Strafford and Laud.

1640.
Meeting of
the Long
Parliament.

2. Both these were imprisoned, and both, Strafford very soon, Laud after a few years, were beheaded. It only shows how the men on each side of these great conflicts persuaded themselves that they were right, that they were fighting for God, religion, and honour, to see the noble way in which they would go to their deaths. Strafford and Laud died, the one like a hero, the other like a saint; speaking with their latest breath of their devotion to their religion, loyalty to their king, and affection to the peace and welfare of the kingdom; though it seems so plain to us now how much they had done to injure them all.

The end of
Strafford
and Laud.

3. Things had, however, come to so bad a pass that it was not the death of those two men which could set them right. A great rebellion broke out in Ireland. Strafford had ruled them with a rod of iron, but he had only crushed the people outwardly, and when he was gone their smothered rage broke out. The Irish

1641.
Rebellion
in Ireland.

indeed had been oppressed by the English for a very long time. They had hardly been looked on as fellow creatures, still less as fellow Christians. In earlier times it had even been said that it was no more sin to kill an Irishman than to kill a dog. It could not be wondered at that they hated their oppressors. In punishment for some rebellion, a great number of English and Scotch Protestants had been settled in Ulster, turning out the old possessors of the land and their chiefs. The natives, who were devoted Catholics, now rose upon these foreign interlopers, and a terrible massacre took place.

4. It was agreed on all hands that the Irish revolt must be put down, but great differences of opinion arose in the parliament as to how much power ought to be confided to the king for suppressing it. His whole previous career had given rise to the gravest distrust. Charles had shown himself arbitrary and faithless; he was also believed to be inclined to favour the Roman Catholic religion, under the influence of his wife, who was still more unpopular than he was. It was even rumoured, though without the slightest foundation, that he had stirred up the Irish Catholics to murder the Protestants. All this made Charles deeply indignant.

5. After the death of Strafford he had made advances towards conciliation, by taking as his chief ministers some of the more moderate of the members of parliament, Falkland, **The new ministers.** Hyde, and Colepepper; men who were loyal and conservative, but who still loved liberty and justice, and hated lawless tyranny. The king promised he would do nothing without their advice, and would tell them all he wished or thought of doing. Could he but have kept his word! but that was just the one thing he never could do.

6. That Charles was a good man, in a sense, no one can wish to deny, but he had no feeling of truth or honour in him in his dealings with his subjects. He had probably been **The king's conscience.** bred up in the notion so common among royal personages of that period, that though it was wrong to tell lies to gentlemen, princes, and kings, it was no sin to deceive the people under him. The Archbishop of York had told him, in so many words, that there was a private conscience and a public conscience, and that his public conscience, as a king, might not only dispense with, but oblige him to do, that which was against his private conscience as a man. And it seems that if a man has two consciences, one of which is liable to go exactly contrary to the other, it is much the same as having none at all.

7. This doctrine, outrageous and immoral as it sounds, had, nevertheless, a certain truth in it. A constitutional sovereign, one who has to govern according to the sense of parliament and the nation, cannot and must not act always according to his own judgment. For he sometimes wishes and thinks right, things which the parliament and the majority of the nation think wrong. Our kings and queens may often have to consent to things which perhaps their private minds do not approve, but this does no violence to their conscience, because everybody knows that such affairs are settled by the ministers, or, as we call them, the Cabinet, and the Cabinet is always appointed in agreement with the majority of the House of Commons. It was the great misfortune of the Stuarts that no such plan had been thought of in their days, and as they were too blind, or too careless, or too obstinate to see and conform to the will of the nation, it led to all the disasters which ruined them at last.

8. In an evil hour one of Charles's consciences caused him to break the promise he had made to his ministers, and without their knowledge or consent to take a step which was, perhaps, the most important and the most ruinous in his whole life. He determined to charge five of the principal members of the House of Commons, Hampden, Pym, and three others, with high treason, and to arrest them within the very walls of the parliament. These five were the leaders of the popular party, and it was quite true that they opposed the tyranny of the king. But whatever they did, they did by fair and legal means, and it is evident that if the members might not say and discuss openly what they thought in parliament, the House of Commons would be of no use at all, either as advising and checking the king, or as representing the thoughts and the will of the nation.

1642.
The five
members.

9. This was the most flagrant act of tyranny Charles had yet committed. He went to the House himself, followed by armed soldiers, to seize on the five members by force. But the five members, who had had a hint of what was coming, were not there. They had taken refuge in the city of London, the Londoners being all in favour of liberty, and resolved to defend it; even "the rude people flocked together crying out, 'Privilege of parliament! privilege of parliament!'" The citizens protected the five members, and appointed a guard to watch over them. Everybody was filled with indignation, even the king's friends, and especially those three ministers were, as Hyde, afterwards known as Lord Clarendon, tells us himself, "so much displeased and dejected, that

they were inclined never more to take upon them the care of anything to be transacted in that House, for fear of being looked on as the authors of those counsels which they perfectly detested."

10. In a very few days the five members were brought back in triumph. "The Thames was covered with boats, and its shores with the gazing multitude. Armed vessels, decorated with streamers, were ranged in two lines from London Bridge to Westminster Hall. The members returned upon the river in a ship manned by sailors who had volunteered their services. The train-bands of the city, under the command of the sheriffs, marched along the Strand, attended by a vast crowd of spectators," clamouring for the privilege of parliament. So the five members took their places again, the House of Commons having declared that any one who attempted to arrest them was a public enemy to the commonwealth.

11. The king, who was bitterly mortified and ashamed, and who was perpetually hooted and shouted at by the rabble, could not bear to stay and see the triumph of the parliament, which was his own defeat. He left Whitehall and London, and never came back to them till he came back to die.

This violence of the king we may look on as the beginning of the great civil war. He and the parliament had negotiations for some few months longer, but they could never be friends again. Both parties began to muster up their supporters and to raise armies. In August 1642. King Charles set up his standard at Nottingham, on an eminence, still called Standard Hill, and the war was begun. The parliament chose the Earl of Essex as their general, and the first battle in the great struggle was fought in October, at Edgehill. It was a sort of drawn battle, in which neither side conquered; but for some time afterwards things went best with the Royalist party.

12. The two armies were very unlike one another, and the king's was by far the best, though he had no great general to command it. One of his principal officers was his nephew, Prince Rupert, who was wonderfully bold and dashing as a soldier, though he had not the qualities of a commander. The greater part of the nobility and gentry were on the side of the king, and hastened to rally around him in his need. Though they were not trained soldiers, they were high-spirited and brave, accustomed to riding, shooting, hunting, and fencing; whilst the parliament had only been able to enlist the lower sort of hire-

lings, many of whom were "a mere rabble of tapsters and serving-men out of place." Nor did the Earl of Essex prove himself a clever commander. Very early in the war, Hampden, who would probably have been as good a general as he was a statesman, was killed in a skirmish with Prince Rupert.

13. But now there began to come into note the man who before very long rose to be the head of everything, and whose name is the most famous in all this period—Oliver Cromwell. Those who think Charles I. a saint naturally think Cromwell a wicked murderer, and his memory is still hated and reviled by some. But nobody can help seeing that he was an extraordinary man—a strong man with an iron will, a true genius for command, and a sincere feeling of religion. As to his acts, it would be vain to attempt to justify them all, but that he saved England at this time from slavery and ruin can hardly be denied.

Oliver
Cromwell.

14. He was a member of the Long Parliament, and was made an officer in its army, though he had not been trained to war. When he compared the two armies, he very soon saw what must be done, and set himself to do it. **His army.** He would not be content with a hired rabble such as the parliament had begun with; he determined to new model first his own regiment, and then the whole army. His regiment soon became famous under the name of "Cromwell's Ironsides," and the army when he had remodelled it was perhaps the most wonderful army the world ever saw. The soldiers had high pay; they were no longer the lowest of the people, but men of decent station, grave character, and some education. They gloried in saying they had not been forced into the service, nor had enlisted for the sake of lucre, but were freeborn Englishmen, who willingly put their lives in jeopardy for the liberties and religion of England.

15. Religion, indeed, was the mainspring of all their lives and actions. But it was a strange religion, with as much hatred in it as love. They were irreproachable in their moral conduct; there was no swearing, no drinking or any other excess among them; but they were most bitter and severe upon any who thought differently from themselves on the doctrines of religion. These soldiers and Cromwell himself were different from the Presbyterians, who were beginning to spread very much in England as well as in Scotland, and who had a strict Church discipline of their own. They called themselves Independents, and thought that every Christian congregation had a right to govern

itself ; so to Popery and Prelacy they added the farther hatred of Presbyterianism.

16. The indignation and contempt they felt against the Church of England led them to do many things which sound to us most irreverent and revolting, such as stabling their horses in St. Paul's and other cathedrals, breaking down the carved work and beautiful ornaments, and damaging them in a cruel way. A few years after the wars were over, an English gentleman, travelling through the country, gives us this account of their doings in Lincoln Cathedral :—"The soldiers had lately knocked off most of the brasses from the gravestones, so as few inscriptions were left ; they told us that these men went in with axes and hammers, and shut themselves in till they had rent and torn off some barge-loads of metal, not sparing even the monuments of the dead, so hellish an avarice possessed them." It was not avarice which possessed them, but what they believed to be zeal for God's glory and the faith of Christ.

17. With all their pride and sternness, they knew at the same time how to be self-denying and obedient. Cromwell maintained a strict discipline ; he caused them to be rigidly drilled and taught the soldier's art, and they very soon surpassed their enemies. They were as brave and enthusiastic as the Cavaliers, and they were trained, and steady, and submissive as the Cavaliers never could be. "From the time the army was remodelled," says Macaulay, "to the time it was disbanded it never found, either in the British Isles or on the Continent, an enemy who could stand its onset. In England, Scotland, Ireland, Flanders, the Puritan warriors, often surrounded by difficulties, sometimes contending against threefold odds, not only never failed to conquer, but never failed to destroy and break in pieces whatever force was opposed to them. They at length came to regard the day of battle as the day of certain triumph, and marched against the most renowned battalions of Europe with disdainful confidence. . . . Turenne expressed the delight of a true soldier when he learned that it was ever the fashion of Cromwell's pikemen to rejoice greatly when they beheld the enemy."

18. When this army came to be disbanded at last, after many great events had happened, every one felt alarmed as to what the consequences might be. Would the soldiers be seen begging in the streets ? would they turn robbers ? There were 50,000 of them turned loose on the world. But no evil results followed ; they quietly took up useful trades, and "the Royalists themselves confessed that none were charged with any theft or

robbery, and none was heard to ask an alms." Here is the testimony of an eye-witness, and a man far more inclined to the Royalist than the Roundhead side (writing in 1663): "Generally they are the most substantial sort of people and the soberest. . . . Of all the old army now, you cannot see a man begging about the streets. But what? You shall have this captain turned a shoemaker, the lieutenant a baker, this a brewer, that a haberdasher; and every one in his apron and frock, as if they had never done anything else; whereas the other go with their belts and swords, swearing and cursing and stealing, running into people's houses, by force oftentimes, to carry away something; and this is the difference between the temper of one and the other."

19. It was not to be wondered at that this army carried all before it. They defeated the king's forces in two great battles, Marston Moor and Naseby, and in other smaller ones. The Cavaliers could not stand before them, and the power of the parliament was established over the whole country. Charles fled to the Scots; and the Scots gave him up, or, as is sometimes said, sold him to the English, who imprisoned him, first in Holmby House, an old manor-house still standing in Northamptonshire; afterwards in Carisbrook Castle, in the Isle of Wight.

**1645.
Battle of
Naseby.**

20. Now that the parliament was victorious, their principal care was to remodel the religion of the country. Most of the leaders were rigorous Puritans and Presbyterians. They entered into what they called a "solemn league and covenant" to put down Popery and prelacy, heresy and schism. They made a strict alliance with the Scotch Presbyterians, who subscribed the league and covenant with all their hearts. The Scotch "Covenanters" have left an undying name behind them, through the heroism with which in after years they endured terrible persecutions; but for the present their party was in the ascendant, and the English Covenanters now persecuted other people. They turned a great many clergymen out of their parishes, and forbade any one to read the English Prayer-book (which had by this time become very dear to many) even in their own homes. The churches were used by the Puritan ministers.

**The
Covenant.**

**Persecution
of the
Church of
England.**

21. It had lately become a fashion for intelligent people to keep diaries, and when we read those diaries we see how the events which occurred struck the minds of people living in the midst of them, so that they carry us quite back into those old

times, which seem so strange to us when we attempt to realize them. One of these diarists, John Evelyn, tells us how he went into a church one Whitsunday, "and heard one of their canters, who dismissed the assembly rudely, and without any blessing." He says that during this period the Church of England was considered to be "utterly lost," which was a great triumph to the Papists. The only argument that could be brought to prove its visibility and existence, was that the English ambassador in Paris still had his chapel, where the Anglican Liturgy and ceremonies were maintained.

22. They rigorously forbade the keeping of festivals, above all Christmas Day, which was the most joyous and dearly-prized of all. Having made an ordinance "that none should any longer observe the superstitious time of the nativity," they would seize upon any worshippers who ventured to meet and celebrate the Church service. Evelyn tells how "these miscreants" found out a little band with whom he was worshipping one Christmas Day, "held their muskets against them" as they went up to receive the sacrament, as if they would have shot them at the altar, and imprisoned them till the next day, when they were allowed to go home.

23. In their great zeal too the Puritans burnt a great many beautiful pictures which Charles I. had collected, whether of heathen subjects, or of Madonnas and saints, as being likely to lead to idolatry. Not content with that, as they did not care for any pictures at all, they ordered those which could not be pronounced to be sinful to be sold. Cromwell, however, who was too really great a man for this ignorant prejudice, would not allow it to be entirely carried out, and though a great many treasures were sent out of the country, he saved the cartoons of Raphael, which are now in the Kensington Museum.

24. It was not very long before Cromwell and the parliament came to other differences. He and his army being principally

**Cromwell
and the
parliament.**

Independents, while the parliament was Presbyterian, they could not work together, and the army, which had begun by being the servant, ended by being the master and the tyrant. They speedily began to disagree widely about the question of what was to be done with the captive king. Finding that some of the members of parliament were inclined to come to terms with him, one of the colonels of the army, a man named Pride, marched with a regiment of infantry to the entrance of the House, and kept 100 of those members out. This was

called "Pride's Purge," and was certainly more tyrannical than anything Charles had done towards the House of Commons.

25. After this the remains of the parliament agreed that the king should be tried for his life. This was a thing which had never been heard of before. Englishmen were indeed well accustomed to see some of the noblest of their land, dukes, earls, bishops, delicate ladies, even queens, brought to the block; but a crowned king never. Though more than once a worthless or incompetent king had been deposed and had perished miserably, yet his death had always been in secret and in silence. So much sanctity was still believed to attach to a consecrated and anointed sovereign, that to bring him before a tribunal of his subjects still more to shed his sacred blood on the scaffold, appeared like a sacrilege.

Trial of the king.

26. But the Puritan leaders were not men to commit murder in the dark; what they did they would do in the face of day; though by so doing they shocked and appalled not only the king's own friends, but nearly all the people in the land. Although Charles had been so bad a king, and, since his troubles, had become more and more deceitful and false, so that his dearest friends were ashamed and bitterly grieved, yet now that his last days drew nigh his spirit rose. At his trial, and after the sentence of death had been pronounced, he behaved with a firmness and calm dignity worthy of a king.

27. He took a tender leave of his young children; the elder ones as well as the queen were already out of the country. Hume tells how, placing his little son on his knee, he said, "Now they will cut off thy father's head." At these words the child looked very steadfastly upon him. "Mark, child, what I say; they will cut off my head, and perhaps make thee a king. But mark what I say; thou must not be a king as long as thy brothers Charles and James are alive. They will cut off thy brothers' heads when they can catch them; and thy head too they will cut off at last. Therefore, I charge thee, do not be made a king by them!" The duke, sighing, replied, "I will be torn in pieces first." So determined an answer from one of such tender years, filled the king's eyes with tears of joy and admiration.

28. On the scaffold he said that he died for the liberty and laws of the people (perhaps he thought he did)! When he was preparing for the block, Bishop Juxon, who attended him, said, "There is, sir, but one stage more, which, though turbulent and troublesome, is yet a very short one. Consider, it will soon carry you a great way,

**1649.
His execution.**

it will carry you from earth to heaven." . . . The king replied, "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can have place." At one blow his head was severed from his body.

29. From that moment people were ready to forget all his faults, and to consider him, as many do still, a saint and a martyr. Nearly every one in England would have echoed the words of Lord Clarendon, that "the execution of that sentence was the most execrable murder that was ever committed since that of our blessed Saviour." And just as in the old times, if a great saint were put to death, we always hear of miracles being worked at his tomb or by his relics, so now it was said that marvellous cures were performed by the blood of the martyred king. Evelyn even tells us of one that was blind being restored to sight by it.

30. Henceforward, though it was held down by Cromwell and his army, the nation began to hate the new order of things, and to long for the royal family back again. All the Cavaliers, and many Presbyterians, considered Charles's eldest son, a young man of nineteen, as their king, though he did not begin to reign till eleven years afterwards; for all that time the country was entirely under the dominion of the army. The two great powers which had begun the contest—the king and the parliament—were both put an end to, and the army, with Cromwell at its head, was supreme. A sort of shadow of parliament, however, lingered on for a time, while Cromwell had other things to attend to.

**Cromwell
and the
army
supreme.**

31. Another great rebellion broke out in Ireland. Everything that happened in that unfortunate country, every fresh set of people that went and settled there, seemed to make things worse. Carlyle says that the history of it, and its condition at this time, "remains only as a huge blot, an indiscriminate blackness. . . . There are parties on the back of parties, at war with the world and with each other. There are Catholics of the Pale (that is, the part where the early English settlers had lived, see p. 177) under my Lord This and my Lord That; there are old Irish Catholics under papal nuncios and native chiefs, who cannot agree with the other Catholics. There are Royalists under the Duke of Ormond, strong for king without covenant; there are Presbyterians, strong for king with covenant; lastly, Michael Jones and the commonwealth of England, who want neither

**The
condition of
Ireland.**

king nor covenant. All these, plunging and tumbling in huge discord for the last eight years, have made of Ireland and its affairs the black, unutterable blot we speak of. . . . Numerous large masses of armed men have been on foot, full of fiery vehemence and audacity, but without worth as armies; savage hordes rather, full of hatred and mutual hatred, of disobedience, falsity, and noise. Undrilled, unpaid, driving herds of plundered cattle before them for subsistence; rushing down from hill-sides, from ambuscadoes, passes in the mountains; taking shelter always in the bogs, whither the cavalry cannot follow them."

32. Cromwell came upon all this, says Carlyle, "like a torrent of heaven's lightning." He was fiery and rapid as lightning certainly, and he did what he meant to do. He conquered the country, and he brought it into order

1649.

and a sort of peace, but he was terribly cruel. Immense numbers of soldiers, besides priests, friars, and others, were slaughtered, and thousands and thousands of people were driven from their homes, while English Protestants were settled down in their place. Cromwell writes about all this slaughter as if it were the work of the Spirit of God, and wishes "that all honest hearts may give the glory to God." It is bad enough when men lay all the blame of their wicked deeds on the devil, but it is much worse still when they give the glory of them to God.

33. After nine months of this work, and when Ireland was cowed and trampled into tranquillity, Cromwell returned to England, where he was received with great honours, and went to live in poor King Charles's palace at Whitehall. Some time afterwards the parliament gave him Hampton Court Palace, where Charles had also passed much of his time.

34. The next troubles were in Scotland, which took up the cause of the banished Prince Charles, under the brave and loyal Montrose, one of the noblest of all the Royalists.

Though his expedition failed, and he himself was put to death, the prince ventured to come over to Scotland, and was received by a large part of the nation as king. He was a gay and pleasure-loving young fellow, but he now had to promise to be a Presbyterian (a promise which he never meant to keep), and to conform himself outwardly to their strict and gloomy ways. He was kept in such stern order, so preached at, scolded at, and watched, that it seems to have been the most wretched part of his life.

Prince
Charles in
Scotland.

35. The Puritan clergy, Lord Clarendon says, "were in such

continual attendance upon him, that he was never free from their importunities, under pretence of instructing him in religion ; and so they obliged him to their constant hours of their long prayers, and made him observe the Sunday with more rigour than the Jews accustomed to do their Sabbath ; and reprehended him very sharply if he smiled on those days, and if his looks and gestures did not please them ; whilst all their prayers and sermons, at which he was compelled to be present, were libels and bitter invectives against all the actions of his father, the idolatry of his mother, and his own malignity."

36. Cromwell marched into Scotland at the head of his invincible army, and beat the Royalists in a great battle at

1650.
**Battle of
Worcester.**

Dunbar. When Charles and his army left Scotland and marched into England, he followed, and utterly defeated them at Worcester. The young king had to fly for his life, and met with most wonderful adventures and hair-breadth escapes in endeavouring to take refuge in France. He seems to have been fond of telling these adventures afterwards, and they are fully recorded in Lord Clarendon's History. We have them also in a shorter form as they were heard from Charles's own lips, by Samuel Pepys, another man who kept a diary in these days ; one of the most odd and amusing diaries that any one ever wrote. He tells us how the king "fell into discourse of his escape from Worcester, where it made me ready to weep to hear the stories that he told of his difficulties that he had passed through ; as his travelling four days and three nights on foot, every step up to his knees in dirt, with nothing but a green coat and a pair of country breeches on, and a pair of country shoes that made him so sore all over his feet that he could scarce stir. Yet he was forced to run away from a miller and other company that took them for rogues. His sitting at table at one place, where the master of the house, that had not seen him in eight years, did know him but kept it private ; when at the same table there was one that had been of his own regiment at Worcester could not know him, but made him drink the king's health, and said that the king was at least four fingers higher than he. . . . In another place, at his inn, the master of the house, as the king was standing with his hands upon the back of a chair by the fireside, kneeled down and kissed his hand privately, saying that he would not ask him who he was, but bid God bless him whither he was

**Escape of
Charles.**

going. Then the difficulties of getting a boat to get into France" (he started from *Bright-hemsted*, a small fisher town on the coast of Sussex, now called

Brighton), "where he was fain to plot with the master thereof to keep his design from the foreman and a boy (which was all the ship's company), and so get to Fécamp in France. At Rouen he looked so poorly that the people went into the rooms before he went away to see whether he had not stolen something or other."

37. It was just after the battle that the king hid himself in an oak tree, where he could sit in security watching those who came in search of him, and hearing them say what they would do with him when they caught him, which oak tree is still commemorated by the wearing of oak apples on the 29th of May; the day when he was restored to his kingdom. Even all these dangers and hardships must have been pleasanter than his life with the Scotch preachers, one would think.

38. Though in the course of his wanderings Charles was recognized by a large number of both men and women, and though a proclamation was issued promising £1000 to any one who would deliver him up, and declaring the penalty of high treason against any who should harbour or conceal him, not one of them all had a thought of betraying him, either through hope of reward or dread of punishment.

LECTURE XLIX.—THE PROTECTOR AND THE KING.

The rule of Oliver. The fame of England. Death of Oliver. The army supreme. Recall of Charles II. Reaction against the Puritans. The Plague and the Fire.

1. OLIVER and his army were now victorious everywhere. The poor remains of the Long Parliament, which had begun so grandly and had done such brave things, were now sunk into contempt. They looked on with displeasure at the new tyranny which was growing up, but they were quite helpless. At last,

1653.
Cromwell
breaks up
the
parliament.
one day Oliver marched into the House with a body of soldiers, had the Speaker pulled out of his chair by force, called his mace a bauble, and after abusing and insulting the members, turned them all out of the House, and locked the door. No one dared cry "Privilege of Parliament" this time; Oliver and the Ironsides were too strong for them.

2. The government was now supposed to be republican, and England was called a commonwealth; but in fact the whole country lay at the feet of Cromwell. He would have

He is made
Lord
Protector.
liked very much to be made king and called so, but the army, much as they honoured and trusted him, hated the title of king, and he was instead called

the Lord Protector. He now resolved to try and govern in the old way, with a House of Lords and a House of Commons; but his plan did not succeed very well. One of the parliaments he summoned was not fairly elected, and was generally despised. One of its most active members being the leather-seller, Praise-God Barebone, it was derisively called by the people "Barebone's Parliament." His other parliament, when it attempted to do its duty and to put some check on his despotic will, he dissolved, just as James or Charles would have done. His House of Lords was ridiculed by everybody. Scarcely any of the real nobility of the old families which the people respected would attend; it was said that Oliver invited draymen and cobblers to take seats

in it. It was quite true that men of all trades had been officers in Cromwell's army, had done good and true work for the country, and were worthy of all respect; but when they attempted to appear as lords and nobles they became ridiculous, and even the House of Commons would not honour them by calling them lords.

3. If ever there was an absolute monarch in the world, Oliver became one now. Bad as it would have been for the country if this had gone on, it cannot be denied that as long as Oliver reigned he reigned gloriously. He restored ^{His} justice and order; no judge dared touch a bribe now; ^{government.} no one dared stir up strife or tumult. He was even, for those days, tolerant in religion. The great parties had broken up into many different sects by this time, and Oliver strove to make them live peaceably together. He even allowed the Jews to come back to England; none of whom had entered the country since the day when Edward I. had banished them. It is curious to consider that when Shakespeare drew the character of Shylock, he had probably never seen a Jew. Some of them were now permitted to come back, and they, by degrees, established themselves in London, though they were not allowed to build a synagogue till 1662. Cromwell, indeed, became so famous that some of the Jews in foreign parts began to think he must be their expected Messiah, and sent a body of Rabbis to England to try and find out whether he had not had some Jewish ancestors. Cromwell does not seem to have been at all flattered by this compliment, and sent the Rabbis off again in great indignation.

4. It was while Cromwell was Lord Protector that the first missionaries were sent out by England to convert the heathen. England is now, probably, the greatest missionary country in the world; very large sums of money are raised every year by the Church of England and other bodies for the purpose of spreading Christianity far and wide. It was now that the first interest was excited in the cause. The government caused collections to be made in every parish in England for sending missionaries to the American Indians. The first of the missionaries was a most devoted and heroic man named Eliot, who converted a great many of the savages, and translated the Bible into their language.

5. England now rose to great fame and glory abroad. After Elizabeth's death she had sunk down under the Stuart kings to be almost a second-rate power; but Cromwell's wisdom and strength raised her up again, till she ^{England's} seemed the greatest and mightiest nation in Europe. ^{fame.}

All the other countries tried to win her friendship. Her fleet once more became grand and powerful. She had an admiral named Blake, who was as brave and gallant as Raleigh or Drake. England went to war with Holland at this time, which was also a great naval power, with brave admirals and fine ships. But they and all the other enemies of England were conquered. The English pride was much gratified during these wars by the taking

1658.

of Dunkirk, a port in Flanders, for it seemed to make compensation for the loss of Calais, which, though it had happened 100 years before, they never could forget. Evelyn the Royalist notes in his diary, "I went to see the great ship newly built by the Usurper Oliver, carrying ninety-six brass guns, and 1000 tons burthen. In the prow was Oliver on horseback, trampling six nations underfoot—a Scot, Irishman, Dutchman, Frenchman, Spaniard, and English, as was easily made out by their several habits. A Fame held a laurel over his insulting head; the word '*God with us.*'"

6. Still more to his lasting glory, Cromwell was the friend and protector of all the persecuted Protestants abroad. About the same time, when that fine ship was being built, a terrible scene was going on among the Alps, where, nestling among the mountain valleys, lived a harmless race of humble Protestants—the Vaudois, or Waldenses—who had not exactly been converted to Protestantism, but who, living in those secluded regions, had kept fast to primitive Christianity, and had never believed or adopted the new things which Rome had added on in the course of ages. The Duke of Savoy determined to force all these poor people to renounce their faith or to leave their homes. Those who did not or could not go away, and who would not give up their Bibles and their religion, were massacred without mercy. Their sufferings were awful. It was told how "a mother was hurled down a mighty rock with a little infant in her arms, and three days after was found dead, with the little child alive, but fast clasped between the arms of the dead mother, which were cold and stiff, insomuch that those who found them had much ado to get the young child out." Those who could escape into the mountains knew where to turn for help; they sent messengers to England, telling this and many another dreadful tale. All England was in a flame. Cromwell instantly proclaimed a general fast, and a national collection for the help of the survivors. Nearly £40,000 was contributed at once.

1655.

But Cromwell did more. He sent an ambassador to the murdering duke, demanding the instant suspension

of the persecution. Such was the awe inspired by Cromwell's name, that the duke submitted without hesitation ; the innocent people were allowed to return to their homes and to worship God in peace. Cromwell had a noble helper in this work—the Puritan poet Milton. Many of the letters on this business were written by him, and his heart, glowing with pity and indignation, poured itself out in a prayer which is almost like an inspired psalm :—

“Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold ;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not ; in Thy book record their groans,
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks——”

7. Notwithstanding all his glory, and his many noble points, the people in general did not love Oliver. If it were true, as Evelyn thought, that one of the six nations which he was trampling underfoot in the prow of his ship was England, we can well understand the feeling. Nor was it likely that the nation would long submit to be governed by a despotism. There were insurrections and plots, and the Protector knew that his life was not safe. He took all sorts of precautions ; he wore a steel shirt under his clothes ; he never went out unless attended by an escort, and seldom came home by the same road on which he started. He dared not sleep always in the same bed-room, but had several different ones, each of which had a secret door.

8. At last he died a natural death. It was on the day when he had won two of his great victories, and which he used to call his “fortunate day.” As he looked back on his career he seemed to have some misgivings as to parts of his conduct. He did not know if he had always acted as befitted a Christian man ; but some of his last words were, “Truly God is good. He will not leave me ; my work is done ; God will be with His people.”

1658.
Death of
Cromwell.

9 He was buried in Westminster Abbey with more pomp and honours than had been shown to our greatest kings. His son Richard was declared Protector in his stead. Richard was very unlike his father ; he was amiable and harmless, but neither clever nor ambitious ; he was only fitted for the life of a quiet country gentleman. The one great power in the country, Cromwell's army, utterly despised him. He was very soon turned out, and the old Long Parliament, which began to

be contemptuously called the Rump, was called back once more. Richard never made the least effort to keep his high place; he retired very contentedly into private life, and died at last at a good old age.

10. The soldiers soon turned the parliament out again, and made a sort of government of their own. England was still under the army, and now it was with no Cromwell at its head. This seemed too dreadful for Englishmen to endure, and everybody, or nearly everybody, began to long for the old constitution back again, under which England had been free, orderly, and famous; not only the Cavaliers, but the Presbyterians too, desired to have their king back. Only that terrible army, which had never yet been beaten, was determined not to have the king back, but to keep the power in its own hands.

**The army
without
Cromwell.**

11. It is difficult to say what could have been done if the army had remained united; but now that Oliver's firm hand was gone the army began to fall in pieces, and to quarrel within itself. This gave the opportunity so much needed. The most powerful general left was named Monk, who was at the head of one part of the army, and strongly opposed to the other part. He marched down from Scotland to London. As he came, the people flocked around him, imploring him to restore peace and liberty. The fleet sailed up the Thames, and declared against the tyranny of the soldiers. The Londoners assembled by thousands, clamouring for liberty and a free parliament. The people refused to pay any more taxes, and Monk, who had kept silence hitherto, at last declared his mind. He said there should be a free parliament.

12. Everybody knew that the first thing a free parliament would do would be to fetch back the king, and everybody was overjoyed. They lighted bonfires in every street, and all over the country, as far as to the Land's End; they rang the church bells; they all hoped freedom and law were coming back. The Long Parliament met for the last time to issue writs for a new election, and then dissolved itself for ever.

13. Charles II. was now at Breda, in Holland. A fine fleet was sent over to bring him back in triumph to the country which he had quitted in the little fishing-boat ten years before. One of the men in this fleet was Pepys, who tells all about it in his diary. He says he heard that King Charles and all his attendants were in a very poor way, both for clothes and

**1660.
The king
is brought
back.**

money, "their clothes not being worth forty shillings the best of them;" whereas my lords who went to fetch him had very fine things indeed, "as rich as silver and gold can make them." He tells us too how overjoyed the king was when Sir J. Grenville brought him some money, even calling his brother and sister to look at it before it was taken out of the portmanteau. When he was to land at Dover, Pepys followed in a boat, with one of the attendants and "a dog the king loved."

14. The cliffs of Dover were crowded with people; nobles, citizens, men of all sorts, weeping with joy. The mayor presented Charles with a very rich Bible, which he accepted, saying it was "the thing he loved above all things in the world." Would that it had been! The London ministers gave him a Bible afterwards, and he promised them that it should be the rule of all his actions.

All along the road from Dover to London it was one continual triumph, flags flying, bells ringing, wine and ale flowing in rivers, crowds of rejoicing people everywhere. And so he arrived safe in London. "I stood in the Strand and beheld it, and blessed God," says the good and pious John Evelyn.

15. No one yet knew what the king would be like, or whether he was worthy of all this rapture. It soon began to appear that though he had been trained in the school of adversity, he had not learnt wisdom. He was clever **Charles II.** and witty and good-natured; those are his good points. Alas! he had a great many bad ones. Though he had said he loved the Bible above everything in the world, he had not religion enough to keep him from the most shameful vices. He was more frightfully and openly immoral than any king we ever had; he was idle and reckless; he was untruthful and ungrateful. Pepys writes rather despondingly after a time "that the king do mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight or thoughts of business. If any of the sober counsellors give him good advice, and move him in anything that is to his good and honour, the other part, which are his counsellors of pleasure, persuade him that he ought not to hear nor listen to the advice of those old dotards." He professed to be a member of the Church of England, as his father had been, but in his heart he veered about between infidelity and Romanism. On his death-bed he secretly declared himself a Catholic.

16. For the present, however, all went well, and, indeed, his charming manners, his wit and pleasantness, made him popular with most of his subjects to the last, especially as his successor,

they knew, would be much worse than himself. One of his witty courtiers pretending to make his epitaph while he was still alive, wrote—

“Here lies our sovereign lord the king,
Whose word no man relies on;
Who never said a foolish thing,
And never did a wise one.”

17. The people in general were the more rejoiced to have the king and the Church of England restored, because the Puritans had been so intolerably grim and morose. They had put down all amusements and pleasures, bad and good. Not content with forbidding any one to go to church on Christmas Day, and pointing muskets at them as they received the sacrament, they had ordered it to be observed as a fast day. They had pulled down the may-poles, and forbidden all dancing, bell-ringing, puppet-shows, and the like. As was natural, there was now a great reaction. “May-poles were set up in every cross-way, and at the Strand, near Drury Lane, the most prodigious one for height that was perhaps ever seen.” Had it stopped at the may-poles it would have been all very well, but a great many people, and above all, the court, went to the other extreme in far more important matters, and instead of being over religious and strict, gloried in being wicked and dissolute.

It is almost incredible how shameless the king and the lords and ladies about him were. Things that most men would blush to speak of, and which if done at all are done secretly and hidden away, were all public and open. Wicked women were made duchesses and complimented and honoured, while virtuous ladies, and the poor queen among them, were slighted and insulted.

18. But we are not to think that the whole nation were like this. Though the follies and exaggerations of the Puritans were swept away, their good and noble work remained deep-rooted in the hearts of thousands and thousands of Englishmen. In reading the various books describing this period, it is perfectly startling to pass from one to another, and to notice the amazing contrast between them. One of our books might be the ‘*Beauties of the Court of Charles II.*’ which is full of stories of the king, and the courtiers, and the fine ladies, and the lives they led; some of them amusing, but most of them frivolous, disgusting, and degraded. The next one might be the ‘*Life of*

Mrs. Godolphin,' a lady who, in the midst of that profligate court, was so pure, pious, and charitable that she seems to have really been, as Evelyn thought her, "too blessed a creature to converse with mortals, fitted as she was, by a most holy life, to be received into the mansions above;" or it might be the 'Life of Baxter,' one of the most famous of the Puritan clergy, who wrote 'The Saint's Rest.' His life we find filled with grave and holy thoughts, with wisdom, and unhappily with sufferings and persecutions. It is so wonderful to think of those two sorts of life going on in one country at one time, the intense discordance between every idea, every thought, hope, or belief of the two sets, that one feels instinctively it could not last. Happy for England that the grave and God-fearing element proved the enduring one.

19. A great number of the most respectable of the Presbyterians and their ministers had helped in restoring the king; and he on his part had made them many promises of toleration and protection. Even if he wished—and it seems, in his careless way, he did rather wish—to keep these promises, the Cavaliers and the Church of England would not let him. They had been persecuted by the Puritans when their side of the wheel was down, and now that it was up they were determined to have their revenge. Some attempts were at first made to reconcile the moderate Presbyterians, such as Baxter, Howe, and others, with the moderate Episcopalians. They had conferences and discussions, but nothing came of it. Even the more temperate and large-hearted among them could not all believe exactly alike, and they could not agree to differ.

20. The Puritans were terribly persecuted. Two thousand of their clergy were turned out of their livings and left penniless. They were not allowed to have chapels or meeting-houses; any one who attended a Dissenting meeting, if he were convicted three times, might be transported for seven years. If they met ever so quietly in a private house, even to pray for a dying person, it would be called a conventicle, and they would be imprisoned.

Persecution
of the
Puritans.

21. Prisons were not then what they are now, and imprisonment was no light punishment. It would fall with double weight on the Puritans. For no offence but worshipping God according to his conscience, a good, thoughtful, and religious man would be thrust into a cell crowded with villains and ruffians of the lowest class. There, in the midst of oaths and brutality, shocking to hear and see, he would be left to cold, hunger, nakedness and often death. The state of the prisons was so

horrible that there was a special fever, known as gaol fever, which even judges and barristers often caught from the prisoners they were trying, and of which many of these guiltless men died.

22. "It was impossible," says Macaulay, "for the Dissenters to meet together without precautions such as are employed by coiners and receivers of stolen goods. The places of meeting were frequently changed. Worship was performed sometimes just before break of day; sometimes at dead of night. Round the building where the little flock was gathered sentinels were posted, to give the alarm if a stranger drew near. "The minister would have to be disguised as a carter or collier, and would come in through the back yard in a smock-frock, and with a whip in his hand." With all these precautions, they were often caught and carried to prison. Pepys writes in his diary: "I saw several poor creatures carried by, by constables, for being at a conventicle. They go like lambs, without any resistance. I would to God they would either conform . . . or be more wise and not be caught."

23. John Bunyan, who lived in this reign, and was a tinker by trade, was sent to prison for preaching, and kept there twelve years. Not very many people perhaps have read 1660—72. 'The Saint's Rest,' but everybody has read the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' It was during those years of imprisonment, or having, as he said, "lighted on a certain place where was a den" (Bedford Gaol), that he laid him down and slept, and dreamed that wondrous dream.

24. The Dissenters were kept down in many other ways also. No one was allowed to be mayor of a town, or to hold any office in a corporation, without taking the sacrament according to the forms of the English Church. No one was allowed to hold any office in the army or navy, or any government employment, without doing the same, and declaring that he did not believe in transubstantiation. These acts were called the Test and Corporation Acts. Many Dissenters did not particularly object to receive the sacrament in the Church of England now and then; so that to take office, to be made a mayor or an alderman, for instance, they would come to church once, and then all the rest of the year keep away; and in after times, when their meetings were made legal, they would regularly attend their own chapels. But the clergy thought this very dreadful, and complained that it was a great hardship to them to force them to administer the communion to men whom everybody knew to be Dissenters. Some time afterwards a law was passed forbidding a man to

**Test and
Corporation
Acts.**

attend a "conventicle," or Dissenting chapel; during the whole time he held his office. This tyrannical law, however, did not last long.

25. The Test Act was aimed especially against the Roman Catholics, whom the Tories and the Church were quite as willing to persecute as they were the Dissenters. But as both Charles and his brother James were in favour of Romanism, they were rather averse to these acts. In fact, they would have liked to fill the army with Catholics, both officers and men, and so to have oppressed the Church of England in its turn. Charles, however, was more prudent than his brother, and it was not till James's reign that this matter became really formidable.

26. Two dreadful misfortunes befell the city of London during the reign of Charles II. The first was the Great Plague, which broke out in a more terrible way than had been known for hundreds of years; since the time **The Plague.** indeed of the Black Death. The plague was a more frightful disease than any that come upon us now; and the doctors did not know how to treat it. The misery and terror of that awful time can hardly be imagined without reading the letters or diaries of the people who were in the midst of it. Though this was the most terrible visitation of all, the plague had often been in the country before, and the parish registers, written very drily, give some most affecting narratives. In one we read of the deaths of a whole family—father, children, brothers, servants. When they were nearly all dead, and there only remained an uncle and his nephew, and a servant-girl, "the uncle being sick of the plague, and perceiving that he must die, and knowing that his nephew and the girl would not be able to bury him" (the neighbours would be afraid to do so, no doubt), "arose out of his bed, made his own grave, caused his nephew to put some straw into it, and went and laid him down in the said grave, and so departed out of this world." A few days after the nephew died, and lastly the servant-girl; and so the whole family passed away.

27. When the plague came into a house they used to mark a red cross on the door, and write up, "Lord have mercy upon us." Pepys says the first time he saw this, "much against his will," was on a very hot day in June, when he saw it on two or three houses in Drury Lane. **1665.** Soon there were hundreds of houses with that sad mark on them. He tells us how the bells were always tolling; people were afraid to look each other in the face; the discourse in the street was of death,

and nothing else. Nearly all the rich people fled away ; a great many of the clergy among them. The shops were shut up, and the whole city desolate. One clergyman who stayed in the midst of it wrote, "What eye would not weep to see so many habitations uninhabited ? the poor sick not visited, the hungry not fed, the grave not satisfied. Death stares us continually in the face ; . . . the coffins are daily and hourly carried along the streets. The bells never cease to put us in mind of our mortality. The custom was in the beginning to bury the dead in the night only ; now both night and day will hardly be time enough to do it." After six months the plague seemed to have spent itself, but more than 100,000 people had perished in that time.

28. The next year, long before the citizens had had time to recover their courage and spirits, the other awful calamity of the

1666.
The Fire.

Great Fire came upon them. The greater part of the houses in the city were still built of wood, and were many of them very old, so that if it once caught fire it was extremely difficult to put out. The fire broke out, they say, accidentally at the king's baker's, in Pudding Lane, and soon spread all round. Pepys, who is generally the most prosaic and matter-of-fact of men, was hurried into a sort of poetry by the excitement. "As it grew darker," he says, "the fire appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the city, *in a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire*. . . . We stayed till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire . . . an arch of above a mile long : it made me weep to see it." Evelyn describes it no less vividly. "God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame ; the noise and cracking and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like an hideous storm, and the air all about so hot and inflamed that at the last one was not able to approach it."

29. The streets were full of carts, and the river of barges, in which people were trying to save their things. At last it was found that the only way to stop the fire, which continued burning for three days, was to blow up many houses with gunpowder, so as to make gaps, beyond which the flames could not spread. The whole city from the Tower to the Temple was destroyed. St. Paul's Cathedral and innumerable churches were in ashes ; and this is the reason why there are so few really old Gothic churches

remaining in London. No doubt the old city, with its Gothic cathedral, and its quaint timbered houses, was far more beautiful and interesting than the gaunt London of to-day. Very few lives were lost in this fire, but the property destroyed was enormous. "The poor inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields and Moorfields as far as Highgate. . . . Some under tents, some under miserable huts and hovels, many without a rag or any necessary utensils, bed or board, who from delicateness, riches, and easy accommodations, in stately and well-furnished houses, were now reduced to extremest misery and poverty." The booksellers, who lived, as so many do now, in Paternoster Row, lost £150,000 in books.

30. But if all this property was burned, it seems that the plague was burnt out too. The picturesque old wooden houses, with small windows that would not open, were very dirty; the infection would never have been got out of them; and after the great fire had destroyed them all, the plague gradually but entirely disappeared.

LECTURE L.—THE LAST STUART KINGS.

Charles and the King of France. Progress of learning. Death of Charles. James II. Rebellion of Monmouth. The "Bloody Assizes." The king favours Romanism, and breaks the laws. The seven bishops. Birth of a prince. William of Orange. The flight of James.

1. IN their dismay and excitement after the Great Fire, the people could not believe that it arose by accident; they soon made up their minds that it was the work of the Papists. Numbers of innocent Roman Catholics were thrown into prison, and though no proofs could ever be found, and no one now imagines that they had anything to do with it, it was publicly engraved on the tall monument which was built in remembrance of the calamity, that "the dreadful burning of this ancient city was begun and carried on by the treachery and malice of the Popish faction." This inscription was not destroyed till a few years ago.

2. Similar suspicions went on for many years longer. The intrigues and conspiracies of the Catholics in the days of Elizabeth, the still more terrible Gunpowder Treason, had left an impression on the minds of the people which was very slow to wear itself out. A few years later the whole country was agitated by the report of a "Popish Plot," the object of which was said to be to assassinate the king and massacre all the Protestants. Everybody was only too ready to believe it; witnesses came forward to divulge the particulars, and to declare the names of those concerned. The principal witness was one Titus Oates, a man who, besides having a most infamous private character, was especially noted for his frequent changes of religion. Burnet, a bishop who wrote the history of this time, and who saw and conversed with most of the principal people then living, both bad and good, says that Oates was the son of an Anabaptist, that he conversed much with Socinians, became a clergyman of the Church of England, and afterwards attached himself to the

1678.
The Popish
Plot.

Jesuits. The bishop asked him "what were the arguments that prevailed on him to change his religion, and to go over to the Church of Rome. He upon that stood up and laid his hands on his breast, and said, God and His holy angels knew that he had never changed, but that he had gone among them on purpose to betray them." Burnet very naturally concluded that he "could have no regard to anything he either said or swore after that." Another of the main witnesses, Bedloe, had led a very vicious life, and "had made a shift to live on his wits, or rather by his cheats."

3. Nevertheless, so excitable and inflammable were men's minds at that time, that nothing these wretches said, however improbable or even impossible, seemed too hard to credit, even though they could never bring one scrap of evidence to bear out what they declared. The whole country, high and low, rich and poor, seemed bewitched, and mad with terror and rage. They believed everything. Oates and Bedloe swore that two Jesuits had undertaken to shoot the king, for which deed one of them was to receive £1500; the other, "being a pious man," was to have 30,000 masses, at one shilling a mass! These Jesuits, and many others, protesting their innocence with their latest breath, were put to death.

4. A nobleman, standing in the House of Lords, not only expressed his wish that there should not be a Popish man or woman left in the country, but said he would not have even a Popish dog, "not so much as a Popish cat to purr and mew about the king." For this speech he was much applauded. When Burnet tried to save the life of an innocent Roman Catholic gentleman, whose name had been dragged into the supposed plot, he was "railed at with open mouth," and told that he "only studied to save him for the liking he had to any one that would murder the king."

5. In the midst of it all, a Protestant magistrate, who had heard some of the so-called evidence, died, or was murdered in some mysterious way, which has never been explained. His death was instantly laid on the Papists, and the occasion of his funeral was used to excite the fears and fury of the people still farther. It was described very oddly by a man who, if he did not see it himself, says he was informed of it by those who did. "Every one almost fancied a Popish knife at his throat; and at the sermon, beside the preacher, two thumping divines stood upright in the pulpit to guard him from being killed, while he was preaching, by the Papists. . . . A most portentous spectacle

sure," he remarks; "three parsons in one pulpit! Enough of itself, on a like occasion, to excite terror in the audience."

We can hardly believe that a frenzy like this could beset the sober English nation, so proud of its love of fair play and even-handed justice; but notwithstanding the degraded and infamous character of the witnesses, still their testimony and their false oaths were believed, and many innocent Roman Catholics were put to death before the tide turned, and the nation became ashamed of its credulity.

6. Though this plot most likely never existed except in the imagination of the people, and the wicked brains of the false witnesses, it was true that the Protestant religion and the honour of England were both in great danger in the unworthy hands of Charles II. He and his brother James, the Duke of York, with numbers of Romish priests and Jesuits, were secretly labouring to re-convert the country, and to subdue what they called the "pestilent heresy of Protestantism." Charles was in secret league with the King of France, who was eager to help forward in the design.

7. This king, Louis XIV., was perhaps the most remarkable man in Europe. His long reign extended over a period during which England was ruled in succession by no less than seven monarchs, including Oliver Cromwell. **Louis XIV. of France.** During the earlier part of that time he was too young to govern, but he began to do so in earnest about the same time that Charles II. was recalled. Louis spent his whole life in endeavouring to exalt and enlarge the kingdom of France at the expense of any other country which stood in his way. Another of his great aims, though he did not pursue it so steadily as the first, was to further the Catholic religion and subdue the Protestants. A great part of the history of England during his life depended on the feeling with which our rulers regarded Louis, whether they were his friends or his enemies.

8. It is easy to see that the whole national spirit of England would have led her to oppose Louis and his objects; that she would neither allow France to become overwhelmingly powerful by swallowing up all her neighbours, nor suffer the Protestant religion to be crushed. Charles, who had hardly the heart of an Englishman, did not care for either. He made secret treaties with Louis, received bribes and pensions from him, and sold Dunkirk, of which the English were so proud, to the French. The people, who knew something of all this, and guessed more, writhed with shame and displeasure.

9. A war broke out with Holland, "caused," as Evelyn says, "by no provocation, but that the Hollanders exceeded us in commerce and industry, and in everything but envy," which added to the general humiliation. The war was an unfortunate one, and the Dutch ships sailed up the Medway, burned the English vessels, and blockaded the Thames; "a dreadful spectacle as ever England saw, and a dishonour never to be wiped off." After this disgrace, for a short time England allied herself, as was her evident duty and interest, with the Protestant powers Holland and Sweden, and they all bound themselves together to resist the encroachments of France. This was called the Triple Alliance, but it did not last long. Charles soon fell back under the influence of Louis and his bribes, and at last might really almost be called a paid pensioner of France. It was no wonder that, as Pepys tells us, the people began to wish for Oliver back again.

10. It was, moreover, feared that things would be worse still when the king died, and his brother James, who was an avowed Romanist, inherited the throne. Some attempts were even made in parliament to exclude him from the succession; but they were unsuccessful, and the king, being angry at the idea, would not permit parliament to meet for four years. Now the Whigs in their turn began to devise insurrections and plots, one of which was called the Rye-House Plot, for assassinating the king and the Duke of York. In the punishments which followed the discovery of this plot, as was so often the case, the innocent suffered with the guilty; two very noble-minded men in particular, Lord William Russell and Algernon Sidney, are believed to have been convicted on false evidence.

1682.
The Rye-
House Plot.

11. Whilst public affairs were going on in this disturbed and dishonourable way, an event had taken place very quietly which, it has been said, "might have loomed larger than the Plague, and have outshone the glare of the Fire; a something fraught with a wealth of beneficence to mankind, in comparison with which the damage done by those ghastly evils would shrink into insignificance." This was the gathering together of a little band of students for the purpose of "improving natural knowledge." The work which Roger Bacon had begun, which Francis Bacon had carried on, was beginning to spread; the seed they had sown was growing up into a great tree. What these young philosophers proposed was in strict accordance with the advice of Lord Bacon. They intended to study the works and ways of

1682.
The Royal
Society.

nature: astronomy, chemistry, anatomy, magnetism, the spots on the sun, and "divers other things of like nature;" and all this by really looking and observing what the facts were, not by imagining what they ought to be. Two wonderful instruments had lately come into use for helping them in their work, the telescope and the microscope. Though telescopes had been perhaps invented so long ago by Roger Bacon, they were not understood or made any use of till the sixteenth or seventeenth century, and one of the first things these students set themselves to do was to improve them. Microscopes were first invented about 1590, and exhibited in London 1620.

12. The students formed themselves into a society which is still the most learned and important Philosophical Society in England, the Royal Society. When Charles had nothing better or worse to do, he was fond of seeing the experiments of the philosophers, if they were not too difficult, and patronized them as far as he could. The Royal Observatory in Greenwich Park was also founded in this reign.

Intelligent people who began to work and study in this way soon cast aside many of the strange old beliefs of which we heard so much in the more ignorant ages. Evelyn, who was one of the first members of the Royal Society, every now and then says something in his diary which shows how great a change was passing over men's minds. "April 29 was that celebrated eclipse of the sun, so much threatened by the astrologers, and which had so exceedingly alarmed the whole nation that hardly any one would work or stir out of their houses. So ridiculously were they abused by knavish and ignorant star-gazers." But though he adopts so bold and enlightened a tone about eclipses, he becomes dubious and cautious when it comes to meteors and comets. He saw a meteor one night "of an obscure bright colour, very much in shape like the blade of a sword. . . . What this may portend God only knows. . . . I pray God avert His judgments. We have had of late several comets, which though, I believe, appear from natural causes, and of themselves operate not, yet I cannot despise them; they may be warnings from God." He is not sure what to think of alchemy either. He tells a story of a certain person "of very low stature," who by casting some grains of powder into a crucible converted a lump of lead into four ounces of good gold. "This Antonio asserted," says he, "with great obstetation; nor know I what to think of it; there are so many impostors and people who love to tell strange stories."

13. The belief in witches had also begun to die out among the educated classes, though even among those many hardly knew what to think, and most of the people believed in them as firmly as ever their forefathers had done. Any poor old woman who was ugly and cross and wretched enough ran a good chance of being reckoned a witch; and if she once got that reputation, every misfortune which happened in the parish was laid on her shoulders. If the dairy-maid could not make the butter come it was because the witch was at the bottom of the churn; if a horse was tired or ill the witch had been on his back; if a hunted hare escaped from the hounds the huntsman swore at the witch. If the poor old creature made a mistake at church, or said Amen in the wrong place, that was a sign that she was saying her prayers backwards, and was in league with the devil. It was well for her if she escaped being ducked in a pond, or otherwise tormented by the frightened and angry country people. There was, indeed, still a law which condemned witches to death, and three miserable creatures were actually hung not long after this.

14. At last the king, who had been welcomed to his country with such tears of joy and rapture, but who had done so little worthy of the nation's love, ended his inglorious reign. Evelyn, who had blessed God at sight of his coming, tells us in a few solemn lines of his end. "I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness, and, as it were, total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening) which this day se'nnight I was witness of: the king sitting toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleaveland, &c.; a French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery; while about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2000 in gold before them. . . . Six days after all was in the dust!"

1685.
Death of
Charles II.

15. Notwithstanding all his vices and all his meanness, it was looked on as a great misfortune when Charles died. His brother, who was the next heir, was very unpopular, dreaded and disliked by nearly all the country. Not only James II. was he avowedly a Roman Catholic (which was at any rate better than being one hypocritically and secretly), but he was also cruel, revengeful, and obstinate. Nor was he clever like Charles, nor in any way pleasant or good-natured. So much was his religion dreaded, that there had been an idea, as we saw, of excluding him from the throne. He was, however, made king without any opposition, promising to defend the Church of

England and the laws of the land. A letter written at the time of his accession, says that it was "his constant discourse that he would not in the least disturb the established government of the Church." These promises he spent the greater part of his short reign in breaking.

16. Charles II., though he had left no lawful child, had left several illegitimate ones, one of whom, the Duke of Monmouth, was handsome, gay, and attractive, and a great favourite with the people. He was generally, though not correctly, believed to be a legitimate prince, and it was thought that the king had been secretly married to his mother abroad. He was now living on the Continent, and numbers of discontented Whigs, who had been banished for plotting in Charles's reign, and who longed to come home again, persuaded this unfortunate young duke to invade the west of England, and proclaim himself king instead of James. They hoped that many of the nobility and gentry would join him at once, since they were greatly averse to a Roman Catholic king. But it was not so. Many poor men and tradespeople joined him, calling him "King Monmouth," but none of the upper and wealthy classes. The old-fashioned Cavaliers or Tories, though they were sound and zealous Protestants, were loyal to the royal family, and thought it a sin to resist the king. Amongst those who took Monmouth's part and fought in his army was Daniel Defoe, the author of 'Robinson Crusoe,' and the 'History of the Great Plague.' After a few weeks a battle was fought and

1685. Monmouth defeated at a place called Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater. This battle is well worth remembering. It was the last one (worth calling a battle) that was ever fought in England. Perhaps no other of the great countries of Europe has ever passed 200 years without seeing many and terrible battles. Heaven grant England may never see another.

17. After this rebellion James II. had the opportunity of showing his character by the way he treated his conquered subjects. No one could exactly wonder that Monmouth (though his own nephew) and the other leaders of the rebellion were beheaded; but every one wondered and shuddered at the horrible cruelty with which the misguided peasants were punished. The soldiers who had won the battle were left to do as they liked for a time, and treated their prisoners with shocking brutality, hanging and quartering, and boiling the bodies in pitch. These soldiers were under a savage colonel named Kirke, and had a banner with the sacred Lamb upon it, in token

of their special Christianity! They were afterwards bitterly known as Kirke's Lambs.

18. After the soldiers went away the poor people of those parts were given over to still more cruel punishment. A judge was sent down to hold the assizes. The judge was even more brutal than the colonel. His name, the name of Judge Jeffreys, is remembered with horror to this very day. The assizes that he held were called the Bloody Assizes. Jeffreys boasted that he hanged more traitors than any judge had ever hanged before. It is to be hoped his boast was true, for in one month he hanged 320 persons (some say many more), and transported into slavery more than 800.

Judge
Jeffreys.

19. The first person whom he sentenced to death was a lady, who had done no worse than help two poor hunted men to escape, who had been kind and pitiful, just as other women had been to his brother Charles, when he too was trying to escape for his life. One of the last was a woman, also, who had committed the same crime. With her last breath "she thanked God that He had enabled her to succour the desolate, and that the blessing of those who were ready to perish came upon her."

There was one good man who tried to stand between the victims and their murdering judge—their bishop; one whose name is still known to us as the author of our most dear and familiar morning and evening hymns, "Awake, my soul," and "Glory to Thee, my God, this night." Bishop Ken, being grieved to the soul at the slaughter among his hapless flock, did all he could to move the king to pity; but it was all in vain. Judge Jeffreys was left unchecked to carry on his work.

20. When he had been in a town, terrifying and browbeating the captured rebels and their witnesses, and pronouncing his barbarous sentences, there would next come an order to the mayor requiring and commanding him forthwith to erect a gallows for the execution of the condemned persons; it might be ten or twelve persons, or it might be fifty or sixty. Nor were those who were put to death even decently buried. The horrible custom in those days was to expose the heads and bodies of the miserable culprits in public places, so as to strike terror into the hearts of the beholders. The order for erecting the gallows would be followed by the most cold-blooded directions how to dispose of the bodies among the villages round about; two quarters and one head here, four quarters and one head there; some near the windmill, some on the bridge. "In many parishes the peasantry could not assemble in the house of God

without seeing the ghastly face of a neighbour (perhaps of a husband, brother, or father) over the porch." In the midst of sights like this grew up the innocent children of those western counties. It is no wonder that they never forgot it, and that the hatred with which Judge Jeffreys was regarded endured from generation to generation. The king whom Bishop Ken had tried to move to compassion was delighted with all this. Jeffreys said afterwards that if James were inclined to blame anything, it was that the punishments were not severe enough. When Jeffreys returned to London he was received with a hearty welcome, and appointed Lord Chancellor in reward for his services.

21. Having thus put down and abolished both the rebellion and the rebels, the king thought to have all his own way. He,

**James's
government.**

in his turn, determined to be an absolute king, to make and unmake laws at his pleasure; above all, to crush the Church of England, and once more make Romanism supreme. The one thing which the nation hated most was the idea of a standing army. They had by no means forgotten the despotism of Cromwell and his soldiers, and they dreaded and detested the notion of having a separate soldier-class at all. It has been gradually found that, considering the immense armies kept up in foreign lands, England could never hold her own unless she too had her army always ready, and regularly trained and disciplined; though, thanks to "the silver sea, which serves it in the office of a wall," and our "wooden walls," or iron walls, as we now have to call them, we do not need such immense hosts as other countries think themselves obliged to maintain.

22. In defiance of the feeling of the nation, which was perhaps strongest of all among the Tories, the old friends and supporters of the royal house, and far more to

His army. overawe his own people than to defend them from any foreign foe, James set up a large army, which soon amounted to 30,000 men, without the consent of Parliament. Not content with this, in defiance of the laws he had promised to defend, he filled this army with Roman Catholic officers. The Pope himself, who was at this time a very good and reasonable man, tried to persuade James to be less violent and arbitrary, but all in vain.

23. The Tories and the Church tried to submit. The Church had been teaching for a long time that doctrine of James I. about the sinfulness of resisting any king, however bad a one he might be; and they could not see their way to opposing him.

There was, however, one great hope in store for them. The king had two daughters, who, by the orders of their uncle, Charles II., had been brought up as Protestants, and who were both very sincerely attached to the Church of England. One of them was married to her first cousin, William, Prince of Orange, who was at the head of all the Protestants abroad. As the king had no son, and was now growing elderly, it seemed in the course of nature that he would soon die, and his daughter Mary be queen.

23. The bishops and clergy, and Tory gentry, therefore, tried to be patient and wait for the end, which would soon come peaceably they hoped. But James was so blind and infatuated that he went on doing all he could to alienate them, till they could bear it no longer. His

The
universities.

next aggression was against the rights of the universities, which were the special glory of the Church, and might be called the ecclesiastical capitals of the kingdom. According to the laws, no Roman Catholic could hold any office in either of them. The king, however, began to force members of his own Church upon them. A Roman Catholic was made Dean of Christ Church, one of the wealthiest and most honourable posts at Oxford. A Benedictine monk was sent down to Cambridge to be made Master of Arts. The Vice Chancellor and other authorities resisted; they said it was against the law

1687.

to admit any one to a degree who would not take the oaths. They were summoned to appear before the tribunal of the Lord Chancellor Jeffreys. Among those who stood before the bar was one whose noble, grave, and beautiful face was the true symbol of his life and character—the Professor of Mathematics in the university, Sir Isaac Newton. His great work, which will last as long as the world

Sir Isaac
Newton.

lasts, was just about being published, with the sanction and encouragement of the Royal Society; he was ever on the side of liberty and the Protestant religion. What did all that matter to the brutal and ignorant Jeffreys? The Vice Chancellor was deprived of all his offices and income; and the other delegates, Newton among them, were dismissed, the Chancellor saying, in his insolent way, that he would send them away with a text of Scripture, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto you." Could he but have looked on a few years—a hundred years—a thousand years—and seen himself and the man he insulted as they stood in the esteem and hearts of all the world!

24. After this the king interfered in the election of the President of Magdalen College at Oxford, sending down in succession

and commanding the Fellows to elect two of the most unfit men he could find in the whole kingdom; the one secretly, the other openly, a Roman Catholic. When the Fellows had the courage and firmness to resist, "many horrible rude reflections" being made upon the king's authority, said one who heard their debates, they were turned out of their fellowships, and many of them reduced to the utmost poverty.*

25. All this roused the indignation of the Tories and the Church to such a point that their favourite doctrine of passive obedience was strained almost to breaking. As the king was determined to persevere in his course, and to put Catholics into all the most important posts in the kingdom, and as he could get no support, though as yet there was no open resistance, from the Church or the Tories, he was obliged to try and make friends with the Dissenters, and pretend that he wished for liberty of conscience to all. But the Dissenters knew very well what he really wished, and when he talked of indulgence they knew what his indulgence meant. He had given a specimen of that in the way he and his agent, Claverhouse, had treated their brethren, the Covenanters, in Scotland. Directly he began to reign he passed a law enacting that any one in that country who preached in a "conventicle" under a roof, any one who even attended a preaching or prayer-meeting in the open air, should be put to death. The horrible brutality with which these poor innocent people were pursued, tortured, hanged, and drowned, all in the name of religion, might have made Oliver turn in his grave. Though there was no Milton now to write or pray in their behalf, it was long remembered how those martyrs went to their death with words of trust and praise on their lips.

26. Now James tried to get the Dissenters in England to take his part by promising them freedom and protection. He declared that all the laws against liberty of conscience should be repealed, and commanded the bishops and clergy to read the declaration in all the Churches in the kingdom. The bishops, whether they approved of these liberal sentiments or not, knew very well that no King of England had a right to make or unmake laws at his pleasure; they knew too that, though he pretended to wish every one's conscience to be free, he only meant in his heart that the Roman Catholics should be free, for he had shown it in all his actions.

27. The Dissenters knew it too, and for once they and the Church of England joined heartily together in defence of the

Protestant religion and the liberty of Englishmen. Seven bishops who were on the spot refused to read the Declaration of Indulgence, or to tell their clergy to do so. One of the seven was the Archbishop of Canterbury; **The seven bishops.** another was the good Bishop Ken. It was no doubt a bitter moment to them when they found they must either oppose the king or consent to his ruining the Church and the liberties of England. They acted very cautiously and respectfully. They laid a petition before James, in which they assured him that their hesitation did not proceed from any want of duty or obedience to his Majesty, "our Holy Mother the Church of England," they said, "being both in her principles and her constant practice unquestionably loyal;" but yet they declared that they could not in prudence, honour, or conscience publish his Declaration of Indulgence. The king was very angry; he called the petition a libel, and said he was the king, and would be obeyed. His Jesuit confessor, Father Petre, "seemed now as one transported with joy;" he thought the time was come (as indeed it was) when the king would break with the Church of England.

28. The whole nation looked on breathless. Nearly all the clergy followed the bishops' lead. Not above 200 in the whole country could be found to read the Declaration; and of these many did it in a way which would not have pleased the king much had he heard it. Some "declared in their sermons, that though they obeyed the order, they did not approve of the Declaration; and one, more pleasantly than gravely, told his people that though he was obliged to read it, they were not obliged to hear it; and he stopped till they all went out, and then he read it to the walls." The Dean of Westminster could hardly hold the proclamation in his hand for trembling, and "everybody looked under a strange consternation." The king, in the greatest indignation at being thwarted in his will, sent all the seven bishops to the Tower. The Londoners were in wild excitement at seeing the king and the Church in this opposition to one another; but there was no doubt in their minds which was right. Rich and poor crowded around the bishops to cheer and honour them, and to ask their blessing.

29. The king, nevertheless, was as blind and dogged as ever. He caused the bishops to be brought up to trial. The agitation of all the people rose higher and higher. When it was known that after a long trial the bishops were acquitted, the whole air was filled with shouts of joy and triumph. The king heard his

own soldiers shouting too. "So much the worse for them," he said. Even then he had not perception enough to say, "So much the worse for me."

30. In the midst of all this excitement the queen gave birth to a son. This was the last and hardest blow of all. A son would, of course, succeed his father in preference to a daughter; and the birth of this unfortunate child put an end to all the hopes which had been so long cherished that the Princess Mary of Orange would quietly take her father's place. The new-born prince would be brought up a Roman Catholic, and there would be no end to tyranny and oppression. It was believed by great numbers of people that he was not really the son of the king and queen, but was brought into the palace in a warming-pan, and imposed upon the country as a prince, though no one believes that story now.

31. In despair a message was secretly sent over the sea to William, Prince of Orange, to come to the rescue, with the promise that if he would once show himself the people would rise in his support.

William wished for nothing better; he came with an army of 15,000 men, and landed on the fifth of November at Torbay, in Devonshire. It was some time before any nobles or men of importance joined his standard, so much so, indeed, that at one moment he seems even to have thought of returning. By degrees, however, they

William, Prince of Orange. began to gather around him. The northern counties also arose in his cause, and he advanced from Exeter with a large train of English adherents. James came to meet him as far as Salisbury in a pitiable state of fear and uncertainty. One after another of his friends, or those whom he thought his friends, dropped off from him. His second daughter, Anne, who had always lived at court with her husband, the Prince of Denmark, fled from the palace at Whitehall. Many even of the officers of his army joined the Prince of Orange. One of these, and the most important of all, was the very general who had won the victory of Sedgemoor, and who was afterwards known as the greatest commander of his age, John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough. James had always treated him with the utmost confidence and kindness, and had raised him up from being a mere obscure page to high honours and dignities, yet he now betrayed and deserted him in his utmost need. Churchill and his wife were the dearest friends of the Princess Anne, and it was through their influence that she had abandoned her father.

32. James was so utterly disconcerted and disheartened by all these desertions that he returned to London without striking a blow, sent off his wife and young child secretly to France, and in a few days escaped thither himself. 1688.
This was the happiest thing possible for William, He enters
who came to London, having fought no battle, and London.
shed no blood, not as a conqueror, but as a friend and deliverer.

Note, line 7, page 514 : The common people in the streets, says Colley Cibber, talked with the utmost freedom and contempt "of his wild measures," and said that "to drive all England into Popery and slavery, he would find would be teaching an old Lion to dance."

LECTURE LI.—THE REVOLUTION AND KING WILLIAM.

Effects of the Revolution. William and Mary. Religious toleration. The war in Ireland. The French fleet invades England. Liberty of the press. Death of James II. The French king proclaims Prince James King of England. Death of William.

1. THIS Revolution, the Glorious Revolution, as it was proudly called, was the final victory of the liberty of England. All through our history there had been at intervals conflicts and struggles between the power and rights of the king, and the power and rights of the people.

The Revolution. Now it was made clear, once and for ever, to both king and people, that a sovereign could not reign in England unless he reigned for the good of the people; and that he, as much as the poorest of his subjects, was bound by the laws of the land.

2. All the things that the Stuarts had been struggling for so obstinately and so blindly had to be resigned for ever. It was once more laid down clearly by Act of Parliament that the king could raise no money except by consent of the representatives of the people; that he might keep no standing army without the consent of parliament; that parliament was to be elected freely without the king interfering; that, when elected, parliament was to be allowed to discuss matters freely without the king interfering; that the people might offer petitions, if they felt themselves aggrieved, without being punished for it; that the judges were not to be set up and put down according to the king's pleasure, but to continue in their offices as long as they judged wisely, justly, and mercifully; that no man, rich or poor, should be put in prison for a single day by the arbitrary will of the king; that the king had no power to make or unmake laws without the agreement of the parliament. Lastly, it was settled that, in future, no one but a Protestant should be king or queen of England.

3. If William and Mary had been tyrants, perhaps they might have thought a crown and an authority limited like this

were hardly worth accepting; but they were wise enough to know how much greater, happier, and safer it is to be the honoured guardians of a free and united people than to be despotic rulers, feared and hated by slaves and rebels.

4. This was the last great struggle in English history; there have been changes since then, sometimes discontent, sometimes here and there a riot; but the liberty and harmony of the nation have gone on gradually increasing. The rulers have cared more and more for the welfare of the people; they have seen ever more and more plainly the wisdom of being at one with them, and bringing their own will into harmony with the will of the nation. Perhaps the sovereign who has been the wisest of all in this respect, who has seen most clearly the position of a constitutional sovereign, has been Queen Victoria, who has been rewarded by a constant love and loyalty.

5. And this great Revolution was brought about peaceably and legally. The people, even when most excited and enraged, were content with pulling down Roman Catholic chapels, burning crucifixes, vestments, and images of the Pope, and did no harm to a single person. The only one they even wished to injure (and they may surely be forgiven for that) was Judge Jeffreys. He was caught in the disguise of a collier, trying to escape from the country, dragged before the Lord Mayor, who fell into fits at the sight of him, and finally carried to the Tower. It was hard work to get him there; the crowds on all sides pursued his coach howling with rage, brandishing cudgels, and holding up halts in his sight. What a contrast to the day when the seven bishops had been taken to the Tower, in the midst of thousands of weeping people, asking their blessing and praying for them. Even in this world we sometimes see bad men and good men get their deserts. This wretch was not, however, put to death; he was kept in the Tower till he died there very miserably.

6. William, who had a wonderful intellect, steadiness, and devotion, with many other of the noblest qualities of a ruler, was not personally much liked in England. The former kings, even James II., had lived in a kind of intimacy and familiarity with the people which William never attempted. He had cold and distant manners, which were a wonderful contrast to those of the gay and good-humoured Charles. Evelyn says he had a manly, courageous, and wise countenance; but was stately, serious, and reserved. He was no fonder of England than England was of him; indeed, he

called it a villanous country, and to the end of his days he greatly preferred Holland, which we might be more inclined to call a villanous or, at least, a very ugly country. But the flatter a land was the better it was thought in those days. The Alps were looked upon as the place where nature had swept up the rubbish of the world to form and clear the plains of Lombardy.

7. William also very naturally liked his old Dutch friends better than his new English ones, and affronted the people, as so many kings had done before, by giving great rewards and honours to these foreigners. Only he was unlike the other kings who had done that, by not having worthless favourites. His friends were all wise, faithful, and good men, whose only fault was that they were not Englishmen. Nevertheless, though the English grumbled a great deal, as Englishmen will, and gave William a very troublesome reign, they were wise enough to know his value, and when there was any real danger of losing him, and getting James back, they always forgot their discontents and rallied around him.

8. Mary was a most devoted wife. She was good and pious, and winning in her manners; but it shocked the feelings of the people to see her supplant, and aid her husband in

Mary. supplanting, her own father. There was something painful and heartless in the pleasure she exhibited in taking possession of the palace of her father, and sitting in the seat of her step-mother. It was said that she did this in order to show that she thoroughly sympathized with her husband, and that she was only acting a part; but her behaviour, says a looker-on, "was censured by many." She gradually, however, won much love and affection in the country, and was a wise and gentle queen. Her court was a great contrast to that of Charles II. One of her greatest friends, Bishop Burnet, wrote of her that "she set a great example to the whole nation, which shines in every part of it." One of her principal marks of wisdom, he considers, was that "she took ladies off from that idleness which not only wasted their time, but exposed them to many temptations. . . . She engaged many both to read and work."

9. Now at last something like charity and humility appeared in the laws respecting religion. The persecution of the Dissenters came to an end. William hated religious

Religious toleration. tyranny, and wished all peaceable and innocent people in his kingdom to feel safe and free. He would have wished to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, which had so hampered and galled both Dissenters and Roman

Catholics ; but being in these matters wiser than the country at large, he could not succeed in doing so. Parliament would not consent to repeal those acts, and when William wished to extend some toleration to the Roman Catholics, it would not consent to that either ; indeed, some more grievances were added to those they had already, and very harsh laws were enacted against them. These laws do not seem, however, to have been very rigorously executed.

10. The Dissenters were now permitted, under certain restrictions, to have chapels and services according to their consciences, without any fear of being molested or punished. All their ministers, as well as the clergy of the Church of England, were ordered to take the oath of allegiance to the king, and nearly all of them very thankfully accepted the peace and protection he offered them, and were quite willing to do so. One part of this oath used to be "I, A. B., do declare and believe that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatever, to take up arms against the king ;" this clause was now omitted. The doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance had not been found to work well, and even the Tories were beginning to reconsider the matter, and to remember Stephen Langton and Humphrey Bohun, and many another old English worthy who would have scorned the notion of swearing such an oath.

11. But it was a sore trouble to the Anglican clergy. They had been so long preaching about the divine right of kings, and the heinous wickedness of resisting them, that it was rather hard to turn round now and say their preaching had been all wrong, and that the nation and the Church were justified in sending away the king who had ruled so ill, and in choosing another. Nevertheless, most of the clergy had been either convinced of the absurdity of their doctrine by James's persecution of the Church, his falseness and his tyranny, or they persuaded themselves by ingenious arguments that they might lawfully obey William and Mary, took the oaths and kept their churches.

12. A few, among them the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Ken, and some other of the bishops whom James had sent to the Tower, refused. They were treated very gently and patiently ; but at last a new archbishop and bishops were appointed in their stead, and the Church of England went on without them. These bishops, and the clergy who followed them, were called Nonjurors (men who would not take the oath) ; they considered themselves as the true Church

The Non-jurors.

of England, and went on consecrating new bishops now and then. But scarcely any of the laity joined them, for private people had to take no oaths, whatever their personal opinions might be, and went on attending the parish church as usual; so that the Nonjuring Church was a Church without any people, without any buildings, without any money. It lasted on in a sort of feeble way till 1805, when the last of the bishops died.

13. Although King James had fled from England without striking a blow, and some of the Tories and clergy had soothed their consciences in accepting William and Mary by saying that he had abdicated, he was not inclined to give up his kingdom altogether. He had always, like his brother Charles, been the friend and humble ally of Louis XIV., and he now took refuge with him and sought his aid. Louis, perhaps, might not have cared much about James if he had not been the mortal enemy of William. The Prince of Orange, while still only stadtholder (or chief magistrate) of Holland, had seen with alarm how powerful France was growing, and that she was threatening to overtop and crush all the other countries of Europe. He knew too that Louis was the most deadly enemy of Protestantism. It was the ruling passion, the main object of his life, to withstand him.

14. Louis had most cruelly persecuted the Protestants in his own country, and in 1685 had revoked a law, the Edict of Nantes, which had been made in their favour by a former king. Many of the unfortunate French Protestants had fled from their country and had taken refuge in England; bringing with them useful trades and arts, which were a great benefit to their adopted country: in particular silk-weaving, in which they were very skilful. Many of the descendants of the French refugees of all ranks are living amongst us still, and proud now to be Englishmen.

Louis, who would have been glad to see the Protestant religion destroyed in England also, and who was very indignant at seeing his enemy William sitting on the throne of that country, determined to assist James in recovering his dominions.

15. It was thought best for James to begin the attempt in Ireland, where nearly all the population were Catholics, and hated the English Protestant colonists with a deadly hatred. These colonists were in comparison few in number, but they were far more civilized, richer, and more determined. They drew together, resolving to defend themselves, their property, and their religion to the last. A great

James and
Louis XIV.

1685.

The war in
Ireland.

number of them gathered together into the fortified town of Derry, or Londonderry, and refused to allow the soldiers sent by King James to enter. It is said that on the approach of the enemy's troops, and while the governors of the city and the garrison were debating what they should do, thirteen young apprentices boys ran and shut the city gates in the face of James's officers.

16. Then began one of the most famous sieges that ever took place in the British Isles. It lasted 105 days, until the people were all but starved. A handful of oatmeal fried in tallow was a dainty; so were rats and dogs; a puppy's paw sold for five and sixpence. Still they held out. Four thousand of the soldiers were dead; the rest were worn to skeletons; but still they said, "No surrender." At last, and just before it was too late, English ships came to their rescue, bringing food and troops, and the Irish besiegers departed.

1689.
Siege of
Derry.

17. Still James stayed in Ireland, holding his court and behaving as foolishly and tyrannically as ever. Next year William had to go to Ireland himself with an army. A great battle was fought near the river Boyne. The history of that battle seems to explain very clearly the history and fate of the two kings. Almost before the fight was well begun William was wounded in the right shoulder, but he had his wound plastered up; he held his sword with his left hand, managed his horse with the wounded right, was in all the thickest of the fight, leading and cheering his men. James looked on from a safe place on the top of a hill, and as soon as he saw that things were going against him he galloped off to Dublin, and never felt happy till he was safe back in France. One of the Irish officers said afterwards to an Englishman, "Change kings with us, and we will fight you again."

1690.
Battle of the
Boyne.

18. After the war in Ireland was over there was a most terrible persecution of the Roman Catholics, who were looked on as rebels and traitors. Persecution, however, no longer meant burning or beheading. The time when people were put to death for their religion had long gone by in the British Isles. Even this was probably considered more a political than a religious persecution. There were indeed laws banishing bishops, friars, and others from the country, and enacting that if they ever ventured to show their faces again they should be hanged, drawn, and quartered, but it does not seem that a single one was really put to death. They were compelled to hide in caves and hovels, as the Covenanters had done in Scotland; and the Roman Catholic laity were subjected to all sorts of unjust and cruel laws,

which strengthened their bitter hatred to England. The worst of these laws, however, were not made in the reign of William, but in that of his successor.

19. While William was away in Ireland the French king sent a fleet to invade England, which defeated the English ships that were set to guard the coast, and actually landed some troops on English ground. As soon as it was known that a foreign invader had set foot on the shore of Devonshire, the whole country round was up in arms. The beacon-lights blazed on every hill-top. The lords, the gentry, the yeomanry, the whole population poured down every road which led to the sea. They were not thinking now of King James or King William; they were thinking of the dear native land, the sacred soil of England. The French admiral was startled; he would not stay to fight; after burning the little defenceless town of Teignmouth the invaders returned to their ships, having only raised the spirit of the people, turned them more heartily than ever to William and Mary, and away from James, who employed foreign soldiers against his own people.

20. Even the Jacobites (as the adherents of James were now called) shared in the patriotic feeling, and did not wish England to be beaten by foreign fleets and armies. One of James's ministers writes to the king how sorry he is to hear that "some of your Majesty's servants have been so indiscreet as to show their dislike that the French should beat the English at sea."

21. A year or two afterwards the French prepared to invade England again. James and his allies had some hope that Russell, the English admiral who was sent against them, as well as a great many of the officers and sailors, were secretly in favour of the banished king, and would not oppose the invasion. But they were quite mistaken. Russell did really wish well to James, but he did not mean his country to be conquered by the French. He said out boldly, "Do not think that I will let the French triumph over us in our own seas. Understand this, that if I meet them I fight them; aye, though the king himself should be on board."

1692.
Battle of
La Hogue. He kept his word. A great sea-fight took place which lasted five days, the Battle of La Hogue it is called. The English and the Dutch fleets joined together, chased the French ships to their own coast, burnt or seized a great many of them, utterly defeated them, and sailed away, singing, "God save the king." The joy and pride of the English knew no bounds; this was the first great victory

they had gained over the French since the Battle of Agincourt, and the first great defeat Louis XIV. had ever met with.

22. King William was abroad at this time, but Mary was in England, and did all she could in honour of the conquerors, and to succour and comfort the wounded. Feeling all she could do was not enough, she promised to devote one of the finest of the royal palaces for the reception of disabled seamen in all future times. The palace she chose for this purpose was at Greenwich; but it was not till after she died that the plan was carried into effect. Not many years ago the old Greenwich pensioners might still be seen with their wooden legs and wooden arms, enjoying their palace and beautiful park, but perhaps not often thinking of the kind and gentle queen who had given them that honourable home.

23. With all his cold manners and rough ways, William and Mary were devotedly attached to each other, and it was a most terrible sorrow to him when she died, which was not long after Russell's great victory. After the plague disappeared, the most formidable disease to which the English were subject was small-pox, which is now held at bay and half conquered by vaccination, but was then a most common and fatal disease. When Mary was but thirty-two years old she died from it, leaving no children. William continued to reign for some years longer.

1694.
Death of the
queen.

24. One very important thing which took place during those years, and of which we feel the benefit to this day, was what is called the emancipation of the press. Up till this period no one could print a book or a pamphlet without permission. There was an official called a licenser or censor, whose business it was to read any book that an author wished to publish, and give permission if he approved, or forbid if he disapproved, the contents. Sometimes he would forbid very good books and allow very foolish ones. No one was allowed to publish any political news without permission, and the government only sanctioned just what they wanted the nation to know. It had been particularly remarked in the reign of James II., that when the French king did away with the Edict of Nantes, and persecuted the Protestants in the barbarous manner mentioned before, the gazettes which were printed twice a week, and professed to give information of all that was going on in Europe, took no notice of these events, nor would the English people have known anything about them but for private letters and the tales told by the refugees.

1695.
Liberty of
the press.

No one dared publish one word of what was said in parliament ; so that it must have been very difficult for the people to know how the members they had elected were behaving, and whether they were worthy of confidence.

25. Any book may now be published which bears the name of the printer or publisher. If it is thought to be wicked or injurious, the publisher or the author is prosecuted ; but that is the only limit to freedom of publication. And this liberty began in 1695. The first notable result was the quantity of newspapers which began at once to be published. There had been but one or two before, and those very small, very dull, and often obliged to omit the exact things which it would have been most interesting to know. Some of the very early ones consisted of only three or four pages, about five or six inches square. Pepys, however, gives us rather a good account of a newspaper published in his time. "It is pretty, full of news, and no folly in it." Perhaps he could hardly say as much of all our newspapers to-day.

26. It was not quite yet that speeches in parliament were allowed to be published, and when printers and editors began to do so they ran a chance of being severely punished for infringing the "Privileges of Parliament." That, however, was authorized after a time, and now every word spoken in parliament is printed and flying all over the country almost as soon as uttered, and every one may know what the members of the government and parliament think and say about any subject on which the nation is interested. The wisest and cleverest men of both or all parties say the best and wisest things they can on all subjects, either in parliament or at public meetings ; a few hundreds or thousands only can hear them, but millions can and do read them. They learn to take an interest in great matters, to look on both sides, and more or less wisely to form their own opinions. If there is a good deal of chaff mingled with the wheat, that is the fate unhappily of almost every human work.

27. Though there was no more fighting in Ireland or England, the war with the French was still continued on the Continent.

At last William had the satisfaction of humbling his great enemy, and making him sign a peace, the Treaty of Ryswick, giving up a great part of his unjust gains, acknowledging William to be King of England, and promising to do nothing farther to disturb him in his possession of the crown, though he still protected James as his guest in France.

28. This peace did not last long. In 1701 the unfortunate

and unwise King James died, and, to the great indignation and astonishment of the English, Louis seemed to forget his recognition of William, and declared the young son of James to be King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. This great insult roused the English spirit to defiance; they crowded round William urging him to war. He wished for nothing better, but he never went to war again. His health had always been very bad, and now, though he was but fifty-one years old, he was visibly dying. He was riding on the turf at Hampton Court, when his horse stumbled over a mole-hill and threw him; though it was but a slight accident, the shock was too much for him, and in a few weeks he died. Long afterwards the Jacobites used to drink a toast "to the little gentleman in black velvet, who did such good service in 1702," as though they thought the Great Revolution was all undone when King William died.

1701.
Death of
James II.

1702.
Death of
William III.

LECTURE LII.—WHIGS AND TORIES.

Queen Anne and the Churchills. War with France. Battle of Blenheim.
Peace of Utrecht. Negro slaves. Scotland. George of Hanover.
Whigs and Tories. Attempts of the Stuart princes.

1. As William and Mary left no children, the Princess Anne, sister to Mary, and a Protestant like her, succeeded to the throne.

1702. She was not an interesting character. Macaulay
Anne. says that "when in good humour she was meekly stupid, and when in bad humour was sulkily stupid."

She was, however, beloved by the people, for she was simple, affectionate, and good. She was, like most of her subjects, warmly attached to the Church of England, and above all, she was a true Englishwoman. The English nation, who have always been noted for their hatred of foreigners, and who had never loved William, though they could not fail to respect him, were heartily sick of the Dutch, and glad to be under a sovereign of their own blood again. Her husband, Prince

Prince George of Denmark. George, was even less interesting than herself. A description of his character, written while he was still living, ends with telling us, "He is very fat, loves news, his bottle, and the queen;" and that "he has neither many friends nor enemies in England." It seems he was too dull to make either. No one thought of making or even calling him king, and for a long time the real governors of both queen and country were two very clever people, the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. They had not yet reached the high titles of duke and duchess, though they are

The Churchills. best known under them. Churchill was still on his road of preferment from a simple page to the highest subject in the land, and was now an earl. The duchess had been for many years the queen's greatest friend. She was as clever as her mistress was stupid, and as overbearing as her mistress was meek. "The loyalty, the patience, the self-devo-

tion were on the side of the mistress ; the whims, the haughty airs, the fits of ill-temper were on the side of the waiting-woman."

2. The queen and her friend were so intimate that they dropped their titles, and gave each other the names of Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman. The Duchess of Marlborough said that she chose to be called Mrs. Freeman to show how frank and bold she was. The two husbands, Prince George and the duke, were Mr. Morley and Mr. Freeman. The duke was a most remarkable man ; he was wonderfully handsome and fascinating in his manners. His education had not been much attended to ; he never found writing an easy task, and he said himself that all he knew of English history he had learnt from Shakespeare's plays ; but by his own genius he rose to be the greatest soldier and commander of his age. He was noted for sweet temper and for humanity far greater than was common among soldiers and generals of those times. But he was not honourable. He had betrayed King James in the most base and ungrateful manner when his need was the sorest, and had been quite as ready to betray his new master, William, when he thought it for his own interest. Both he and his wife were avaricious, and even miserly. All the world knew of this weakness of his, and a story is told how at one time, when he was unpopular with the people, they mobbed another nobleman in mistake for the duke. "I will easily convince you," said this nobleman, "that I am not my Lord Marlborough. In the first place, I have only two guineas about me, and in the second place they are very much at your service." Everybody in England and abroad knew how completely Anne was under the dominion of the Churchills ; and on the Continent it was believed that the handsome earl was her lover ; but that was entirely wrong. Anne was always faithful to her husband, and the person she really loved was the duchess.

3. As soon as King William was dead, leaving a great war with France just beginning, Marlborough became the principal man in the country, and one of the principal men in Europe. The war went on for many years, and was very glorious to England. The object of it still was to prevent France, and the ever-encroaching Louis, from becoming too powerful. He was now attempting to add Spain to his other dominions by making his grandson king of that country. When he dismissed him to take possession of his crown he was reported to have said, "There are no more Pyrenees." The other nations of Europe, including England,

War with
France.

were determined that the Pyrenees should not be obliterated, and that France and Spain should never be united. It was in the course of this war that the English got possession of Gibraltar, which they have kept ever since, and which is looked on as the key of the Mediterranean Sea.

4. But the most important of the fighting was not in Spain, nor did the Duke of Marlborough go there himself. Most of the German states took part in the war also ; Prussia, Hanover, and some others, sided with England ; Bavaria and Cologne took part with the French. Of all Marlborough's great victories, the most famous was that of Blenheim in Bavaria, the name of which is very familiar to us, partly through the palace which was built and presented to Marlborough by the nation, and named after his greatest triumph, partly by the charming little poem of Southey. "What good came of it at last?" says the child in that poem. Though it might almost be said to turn the fortunes of the whole war ; though for that year the French forces were broken to pieces, and all the conquests they had made in Germany were taken back from them, and though they lost one of their most valuable allies, Bavaria, yet there were many people in England to ask the same question. The Tory party highly disapproved of the war, and thwarted the counsels of Marlborough in all the ways they could.

1704.
Battle of
Blenheim.

5. One at least of their motives for this opposition was not a very noble one. They disapproved of the war with France because it made French wine so dear. "All the bottle companions," says one historian, "many physicians, and great numbers of the lawyers and inferior clergy, were united together in the faction against the Duke of Marlborough." "It was strange," says another, "how much the desire for French wine and the dearness of it alienated many men from the Duke of Marlborough's friendship."

6. There were other reasons against continuing the war which had great weight with the Tory party, one of which, perhaps, was that the King of France was the friend and protector of the old and exiled royal family. They came into power again at last ; the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough fell into disfavour ; the queen took another favourite, and peace was made with France. The great Duke was deprived of all his offices, retired to the Continent, and never saw his mistress again. After her death he was called back to England, raised to his former posts, and when he died was buried with

great glory in Westminster Abbey. It was agreed upon in the peace made at the time of his disgrace that Spain and France should never be united, though the French prince was suffered to be King of Spain; that England should keep Gibraltar and the island of Minorca in the Mediterranean, and that she should receive a large French province in North America, which is now called Nova Scotia. The treaty of Utrecht, however, as this peace is called, was not to the real glory, though it was to the advantage, of England. In making it she deserted her allies in such a dishonourable way that her own soldiers were bitterly ashamed, and she really for that time deserved the title, which causes an Englishman such cruel pain, of "Perfide Albion." One of the stipulations of the same treaty was, that England should have the right of supplying the Spanish colonies in America with negro slaves.

1713.
Treaty of
Utrecht.

7. It was hundreds of years since slavery had seemed to be extinguished for ever; even the stern Conqueror William had seen the duty of putting down the Bristol slave trade; and one cannot but wonder, after so many centuries of Christianity and growing civilization, to find it again in full force. The only explanation we can see is that the slaves now in question were not men of the same race and religion, but negroes and heathen. Even yet men were far from realizing what St. Paul had known so well, that "God had made of one blood all the nations of the earth;" and though they questioned whether it would be lawful to hold Christians in bondage, they had no such doubt about unbaptized Pagans.

The slave
trade.

8. The employment of negro slaves, wonderful to say, had been begun from motives of the truest humanity, and was encouraged by one of the most tender-hearted and pitiful of Christians. Seeing how cruelly the Spanish worked the native Americans in the silver mines, not long after the discovery of America, a priest named Las Casas, out of pure benevolence, recommended the employing of negroes, knowing that they were a much stronger race, and could endure hardships under which the poor Americans sank. Little did he foresee what he was setting on foot; the kidnapping, the tortures, the murders. This wicked trade brought great profits, and the English people were so dead to any feeling of pity for the wretched negroes, that this part of the Treaty of Utrecht seems to have pleased them almost better than any other.

9. Not only did the Tories gain the upper hand in the matter

of the war and the disfavour of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough; there was actually a revival of the old High Church and Tory doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance to a hereditary sovereign. This doctrine would perhaps never have been revived in the Church of England had there been a tyrannical, or Catholic, or Dissenting monarch; but with Queen Anne on the throne, who, though she strove to be impartial, was inclined to Toryism and High Church herself, and whom they therefore had not the slightest wish to resist, it was a good opportunity for bringing it forward once more. A Dr.

1709.
Dr. Sache-
verell's
sermons.

Sacheverell accordingly preached two sermons, declaring that the Revolution had been unlawful, and that nothing could ever justify resistance to a king. For preaching this doctrine Dr. Sacheverell was tried and condemned by the House of Lords; but they gave him so light a punishment that it was almost a victory to him rather than a defeat. Nearly everybody took his part; and when he travelled through the country not long after this he was received like a hero or conquering prince: with flags, bell-ringing, bands of music, and every sign of rejoicing. This was made an opportunity too for attacking the Dissenters, who of course were all in favour of the Revolution; some of their chapels were attacked by furious mobs, and even their private dwellings were threatened. Thus it is evident that though a fair amount of toleration was granted by the law, and approved by the more enlightened classes, it had not by any means made its way among the masses. Some of the bishops and of the higher London clergy were in favour of it, but the country clergy, who at that time were much lower in position and education than they are now, and the country people had not yet arrived at agreeing with them.

10. Though there was still a good deal of prejudice and narrow-mindedness in the country, and party spirit ran very high there, we have a charming idea of rural England at this time. Addison, a very wise and good man, and one of the most delightful writers in Queen Anne's reign, has given us a description of a country gentleman, which is as perfect in its way as the pictures Chaucer painted so vividly 300 years before. Sir Roger de Coverley might, one thinks, have been the lineal descendant of Chaucer's knight fallen on less heroic times. He lives in his old country seat, and "does not a little value himself upon his ancient descent." There we see him, the very ideal of a "fine old English gentleman;" quite a little king amongst the people, but a beneficent, tender-hearted, sympathizing king. All his serv-

ants have grown grey in his house. "You would take his *valet de chambre* for his brother ; his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy councillor." He is such a kind master that none of his servants ever wish to leave him ; his manners towards them are "a mixture of the father and the master of the family."

11. He is as much beloved by the tenantry and neighbours. "The farmers' sons thought themselves happy if they could open a gate for the good old knight as he passed by ; which he generally requited with a nod or a smile, and a kind inquiry after their fathers or uncles." Just as kind and good is he towards his old horses and dogs, which are kept with great care and tenderness, in remembrance of their past services. He rides out hunting "encompassed by his tenants and servants, and cheering his hounds with all the gaiety of five and twenty ;" but at the last moment, when the poor hare is quite spent, and almost within the reach of her enemies, a signal is given, and the dogs come to a full stop. "At the same time Sir Roger rode forward, and, alighting, took up the hare in his arms, which he soon after delivered up to one of his servants, with an order if she could be kept alive to let her go in his great orchard ; where it seems he has several of those prisoners of war, who live together in a very comfortable captivity."

12. He is a high-bred gentleman in every look and every thought ; but his education had not been very profound. He did not choose to have a very learned clergyman as his chaplain, since he "was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table." His favourite reading seems to have been 'Baker's Chronicle ;' of which we too have read some. He does not quite know what to think about witches, gipsies, and fortune-tellers. He takes care to protect a poor old woman, who is suspected of practising the black art, from ill usage ; but at the same time advises her, "as a justice of the peace, to avoid all communication with the devil, and never to hurt any of her neighbours' cattle."

The account of the rural Sunday and of Sir Roger at church is too delicious to be spoilt by extracts ; it ought to be read as Addison wrote it ('Spectator,' No. 112, July 9, 1711), as indeed ought his whole portraiture. We can hardly fail to think, as we read it, "He was a veray parfit gentle knight ;" and were there many such as he, we should not have much fear for the future of the country.

13. It was in Anne's reign that England and Scotland were finally made into one kingdom. Though they had been under one king for more than 100 years, they had not been looked on as one nation; for each had a separate parliament, separate laws, and a separate coinage of money. Since many of the Scotch people looked on the Stuart kings as peculiarly their own, they had fought for King James in the days of William and Mary, and afterwards fought for his son and grandson. The state of Scotland was a very curious one. It was divided almost completely between two distinct races of men. The Lowlanders were, as was mentioned long ago (see p. 247), really of English or Saxon blood, and all the southern part of Scotland, which was the part inhabited by them, was now nearly as much civilized as England and the other European nations. These Scotch were rigid Protestants and Presbyterians. But in the northern part, where the Highlanders lived, everything was very different. The inhabitants of those mountainous regions were descended from the old Celtic tribes whom first the Romans, and then the English, had hemmed in among the hills and lakes, and who had mixed but little with their southern neighbours, except to fight or rob them. They were still separated into tribes or clans; and the head or chief of the clan was the only human being they respected. Him they would obey almost like a god upon earth; and would fight in any quarrel he might have in hand, without the slightest care for the rights or the wrongs of it. Their code of morality was rather singular. Stealing cows, or, as it was politely called, "lifting," was a most honourable occupation, and worthy of a gentleman; next best indeed to fighting; but stealing sheep was degrading and infamous. Work or labour of any sort was also degrading, and only fit for women. With all this, the Highlanders had a grace and charm of manner which was sadly wanting in the Lowlanders, and which seems to belong to the Celtic races. The Highland tribes still for the most part adhered to the Catholic religion. It was a long time yet before these wild people could learn order and obedience—not till after one or two great rebellions; but the beginning of it was made when the two countries were brought, at least nominally, under one law. Though after this there was but one parliament for both nations, the Scotch never accepted the Church of England, but retained their Presbyterian religion.

14. Anne had several children, but the same fatality which seemed to attend the Stuart family, as it had before attended the

Tudors, pursued her, and they all died in infancy or childhood. It was necessary, therefore, to look out for a successor to the throne. The English were resolved not to have the son of James, whom Louis XIV. had declared to be king; and who, though he called himself James III., was generally known as the 'Chevalier de St. George,' or less politely as the "Pretender;" and who was a Roman Catholic like his father. Many Jacobites in England secretly hoped that he might yet have a chance when Anne died, since the next heir to the throne was a stranger and foreigner, and only a distant relation to the royal family.

15. It had been settled during William's life that if neither he and Queen Mary, nor Anne, left any children, the crown must be given to a Protestant German prince, the Elector of Hanover, who was descended from that daughter of James I. who had been called the Queen of Hearts. This is the last change of dynasty or royal family which has taken place; the House of Hanover, or Brunswick, as it is often called, has gone on reigning in England ever since, though it has no longer anything to do with Hanover. It seems that Queen Anne herself would have been inclined to favour her half-brother, and had he consented to change his religion he would doubtless have been welcomed back to England, for there were still many Tories who longed for the old royal line to be restored. There was only one thing they loved more than a hereditary king, and that was the Protestant Church of England. To his lasting honour, the young prince would not change his religion for a crown. With his own hand he wrote these plain and honest words, "I neither want counsel nor advice to remain unalterable in my fixed resolution of never dissembling my religion, but rather to abandon all than act against my conscience and honour, cost what it will."

16. When Queen Anne died, therefore, Prince George of Hanover was sent for from Germany, and proclaimed king. Thus England saw herself once more under the rule of a foreigner. George could not even speak English, and the only way in which he and his prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, could talk together was in very bad Latin. His private life was not very much better than Charles II.'s. He was neither a clever nor an attractive man, and was never much liked in England. He returned the compliment, as William had done, by not liking England much. He greatly preferred his little dominion in Germany, and really seems to have been of no use

1714.
Death of
Anne.

George I.

at all in England, except as a solid figure on the throne, which kept James Stuart out.

17. The old romantic and religious reverence for royalty seemed to die out under these new and elected kings. Though they were distantly descended from the royal family, they were not in the direct line, and there seemed no special sacredness about them. It is amusing to see, in the days of the Stuarts, how astonished Pepys was when it dawned upon his understanding that kings and princes had some resemblance to other mortals. One day he was with the king in his barge, "hearing him and the duke (James) talk, and seeing and observing their manner of discourse. And, God forgive me ! though I admire them with all the duty possible, yet the more a man considers and observes them, the less he finds of difference between them and other men, though (blessed be God !) they are both princes of great nobleness and spirits."

18. The miraculous power of curing disease by the royal touch, which had come down from the days of Edward the Confessor, was not supposed to be conferred upon the Hanoverian princes ; but if any one could perform that miracle it was the banished Stuarts, who did still practise it now and then, or attempt to do so. In England there no longer seemed anything supernatural in the respectable, or, perhaps, not very respectable, gentleman at the head of the government. For a long time now the history of England becomes very prosaic.

19. During the last 200 years the country had been in a high state of excitement. There had been the Reformation and its martyrs ; the Spanish Armada and the deliverance of England ; the long struggle against despotism, both in Church and State ; every one of which had stirred men's hearts to their very depths, and roused them to enthusiasm and heroism. But now that all was achieved, that there was no more tyranny and no more martyrdom, everything gradually settled down into quietness and a kind of stagnation. Conflicts, both religious and political, still went on, but they were no longer at fever heat.

It was thought to be one of the most admirable effects of the Royal Society, which had been founded thirty or forty years before, that it drew men's minds off from political matters, and furnished them with "subjects of discourse which might be treated without warmth of passion." Addison, who, with all his wisdom and goodness, was evidently not a natural philosopher, does not speak very reverently of all those wonderful inventions before referred to. He says, "The air-pump, the

barometer, the quadrant, and the like inventions were thrown out to those busy spirits as tubs and barrels are to a whale, that he may let the ship sail on without disturbance, while he diverts himself with those innocent amusements." While the philosophers were thus "diverting" themselves, we can see that the poets had undergone a change too. Instead of leading men to feel or to imagine, instead of carrying them into fairyland or dreamland, into heaven or hell, they taught them to judge and to reflect. Pope's poetry, some of which is very interesting, is generally cold, hard, and brilliant like cast steel.

20. A great part of the history of these times is taken up with the disputes between Whigs and Tories, each striving for the ascendancy. It is not very interesting to follow the details of their struggle, or always to see who were up and who were down, but it is well to know clearly what they each wished and believed. These two great parties were then, just as they are now, agreed up to a certain point. They both desired to maintain the English constitution; they both wished for a hereditary monarch, who should govern the country in agreement with the Houses of Parliament, the Lords and Commons. The Tories did not wish for a despotic sovereign, who could govern according to his own will, unshackled by law or parliament, any more than the Whigs did. The Whigs did not wish for a republic and the putting down of the monarchy altogether, any more than the Tories did. The great difference between them was that the Tories seem to have thought the constitution was already quite perfect, and that no change ought ever to be made in it; whilst the Whigs held that as other circumstances, the condition of the people, for instance, changed with time, the constitution ought to adapt itself to those changes, and to grow as the nation grew. The Tories thought most of the rights of the king and the upper classes, the duty of order and obedience, and the evil of rebellion. The Whigs thought most of the blessing of liberty and the rights of the whole nation. The Tories wished all people to obey the bishops, to believe the prayer-book, and to go to church. The Whigs thought all people ought to judge for themselves, and might go to chapel if they thought fit.

It is well worthy of note that the old nobility of England have never, as might perhaps have been expected, belonged entirely to the Tory class. A great number of them have always cared heartily for the rights and liberties of the whole nation, and have been the leaders of the Whigs.

Whigs and
Tories.

21. William III., who wished to be fair and just to all parties, had chosen his ministers some from the Tories and some from the Whigs. When the two did not agree, which was of course very often, he himself decided between them. The same plan went on during Anne's reign, and she tried to hold the balance fairly. But it was extremely difficult to do this, and kept the king or queen very responsible and very anxious, while the quarrels between the two parties made it almost impossible to act in a firm or decided manner. In the latter part of her reign a new plan was attempted—that of choosing all the members of the government, the Cabinet, as they were called, from one side or the other, according to the majority of the House of **The Cabinet.** Commons. Thus, if the people in the country were most in favour of the Tories, and chose most Tory members of parliament, the ministers appointed would be Tories too, and would feel very strong, all agreeing with each other, and having the greater part of the country to back them. If the people were more inclined to the Whigs, and elected most Whig members, the ministers would be Whigs too. Whenever the country changed its mind, which it was sure to do sometimes, then the ministers were changed also. This is the system by which our country has been governed ever since.

22. As it was the principles of the Whig party which had set George I. on the throne, they now came into power, and continued to govern the country for a long time. One of the first things they did was to banish some of the leading Tories from the country. It was said, though not exactly proved, that they had been secretly planning to bring James Stuart, the "Pretender," back. It is quite true that many of the Tories still had an uneasy feeling in their hearts about the divine right of kings and their eldest sons, and could not be quite clear as to whether it had been right to drive James away, and to pass over his son. But these uncertainties were not strong enough to induce them to risk anything to bring the Chevalier or Pretender back.

23. The year after Anne's death, the son of James thought he would make an effort to recover the kingdom. The attempt was begun in the Highlands of Scotland, as most of the wild clansmen, or rather their chiefs, were in favour of the Stuarts; almost the only one on the other side was the Duke of Argyll, who was at the head of the Campbells. The clansmen cared neither for James nor George, but only for their own chiefs, and would fight as willingly on one side as the other if the chief commanded it.

1715.
The first
Jacobite
rising.

They liked the fighting very much, and the plunder of the rich Lowlanders and English still better.

24. It was hoped that, when once a beginning was made for them, many of the English would rise also in support of the prince. But very few of them did so. The English government arrested some of the most influential men who were thought likely to join the insurrection, and the few who did really rebel were defeated at Preston. A battle was also fought in Scotland at Sheriff-muir, but not much came of that, for it was never decided which party got the best of it. As the old ballad quoted in the 'Heart of Midlothian' has it—

“There's some say that we wan,
And some say that they wan,
And some say that none wan
At a', man.

But one thing is sure,
That at Sheriff-muir
A battle there was,
Which I saw, man.”

The whole rebellion was so unsuccessful that the Chevalier was very glad to escape safely to France. He made one or two other efforts during the reign of George I., getting different foreign nations to help him,—once the King of Sweden, once the King of Spain,—but all to no purpose. Nor had his son any better success when his turn came to try his fortune.

25. Neither of these two princes, James's son and grandson, were great or good men, worthy to be kings of England. The elder one is said “not to have been absolutely wanting in capacity or courage,” but it was added that he gave the most undeniable evidence of being his father's own son (which we saw was disbelieved by every one at his birth) “by constantly resisting the counsels of wise men.” Every one feels a romantic interest in his son, Prince Charles Edward, because of his adventures, and because we know most about him from the Waverley novels; but those who knew him best give a very different view of his character from the chivalrous one of Sir Walter Scott. One of his friends and supporters was obliged to confess, “I never heard him express any noble or benevolent sentiment, the certain indications of a great soul and a good heart, or discover any sorrow or compassion for the misfortunes of so many worthy men who had suffered in his cause.”

26. When George I. died his son George II. succeeded him without any dispute, and it was not till many years after that there

1745.
The second
Jacobite
rising.

was any more trouble with the Stuarts. But when the young Prince Charles Edward was about twenty-five he came over to make one more effort in his father's cause and his own. The Highlands rose again, and for a time all things went well with him.

He gained a victory over the English at Preston-Pans in Scotland, and kept a gay court in Edinburgh, though the castle still held out for the English. He then marched into England at the head of a wild little army of Highlanders, hoping that the Tory lords and gentlemen would join him in great numbers. But he was disappointed. These lords and gentlemen were safe, free, and prosperous under the government of George II.; and though they might grumble a little sometimes, and perhaps think kindly of the exiled family, their feelings were very tepid, and they did not care enough to risk their lives and fortunes by rebelling. The common people were still more indifferent. They seemed inclined, as was observed at the time, to look on and cry, "Fight dog! fight bear!" without taking any part themselves if they could help it; but feeling very angry with the Pretender for coming to disturb the peace of the kingdom.

27. When the prince had marched as far as Derby, and had found no support in England, he had to march back again. A last decisive battle was fought at Culloden in Scotland, and then he too had to flee. He was hiding about in the Highlands for five months, and had as many adventures as his great uncle Charles II.; at last he arrived safely in France. This was the last serious attempt of the Stuarts. Though the Jacobites continued to drink the health of the "king over the water" till nearly the end of George II.'s reign, they did nothing more for him. He was never brought back in triumph as Charles II. had been. A few years later the English Roman Catholics even began to pray for the royal family of the House of Hanover.

28. The gradual dying out of Jacobitism is rather amusingly illustrated in the life of Dr. Johnson. He gloried in being a Tory to the last hour of his life, and had, doubtless, some little sentimental attachment to the House of Stuart. This, however, did not prevent him from being fervently loyal to the reigning family and receiving a pension from King George. It appears that certain "reflections" were cast upon him for accepting this pension, as being inconsistent with his principles. When this was mentioned to him, "Why, sir," said he, with a hearty laugh, "it is a mighty foolish noise that they make. I have accepted of a pension as a reward which has been thought due to my

literary merit; and now that I have this pension I am the same man in every respect that I have ever been; I retain the same principles. It is true that I cannot now curse" (smiling) "the House of Hanover; nor would it be decent for me to drink King James's health in the wine that King George gives me money to pay for. But, sir, I think that the pleasure of cursing the House of Hanover and drinking King James's health are amply overbalanced by £300 a year."

"He no doubt," says Boswell, "had an early attachment to the House of Stuart; but his zeal had cooled as his reason strengthened. Indeed, I heard him once say that after the death of a violent Whig, with whom he used to contend with great eagerness, he felt his Toryism much abated."

Charles Edward fell into most disgraceful and degrading habits abroad, and died very little respected by any one. His younger brother became a cardinal, and died in the beginning of this century. So passed away the royal House of Stuart.

1807.

The end of
the Stuarts.

LECTURE LIII.—SLEEP AND WAKING.

The Whigs and Walpole. Decline of enthusiasm. Foreign wars. Disasters and despondency. The elder Pitt. Canada and Wolfe. India and Clive. The Methodists.

1. **GEORGE II.** was not much more interesting than his father, nor was his private character any better. Though he could at least speak English, he did not feel like an English-

1727.

George II.

Whigs continued to govern England, with Sir Robert Walpole as prime minister. Walpole was a shrewd, sensible man, and the country became more and more pacific under his influence. The Tories and the Church grew reconciled to the new dynasty; the Dissenters were placed in a better position. In order to enable them to hold offices in their towns as mayors, aldermen, &c., from which the Test and Corporation Acts shut them out, a law was passed called the Indemnity Act, which excused them from receiving the sacrament of the Church of England. The same Act was passed again and again, until about fifty years ago, when the Test and Corporation Acts themselves were repealed.

2. Both Whigs and Tories learnt to act with more moderation, and not to regard each other as mortal enemies. But though

Walpole sincerely desired the good of the country, he did a great deal to degrade its character. The principal means by which he kept everything so quiet, and was able to get his own way, was by bribing people, right and left. The high spirit of English gentlemen was sunk so low that many, even members of parliament, would sell their votes for Walpole's bribes. Sometimes he bribed them by giving them places and offices with comfortable salaries attached; sometimes by presents of good hard money, which were delicately called "gratifications." In this way he could nearly always get majorities in the House of Commons.

3. The government had also a great deal of influence in the

elections. It was almost worse now than it had been in the days of Jack Cade. In many places the government could make people elect any one whom they chose to appoint; in others great noblemen could do the same. Some places, which in old days were rich and important, and used to send members to represent them in parliament, had now dwindled away into poor little villages, or much less than villages, where there might be only a few sheep and shepherds left. Still they went on sending members to parliament. These came to be called "rotten boroughs." Other places which had formerly been insignificant hamlets had now grown into large towns, with thousands of inhabitants; these might not send any members at all.

4. Thus it was evident that parliament did not fairly represent the opinion of the country. Walpole knew this very well; he knew too that it was his duty to act according to the sense and will of the nation; and however well he might have bribed the parliament, and however sure he might be of a great majority in the House, if the people outside really cared about the matter, and showed that they objected to his plans, he always gave way.

5. George II., being a brave man and a good soldier, was fond of interfering in Continental wars, with which England need not have been burdened. These wars are very confusing, and have not much to do with English history. The first of them is called the War of the Austrian Succession, and it was not popular in England, because the people believed that the king took part in it for the good not of England, but of Hanover, of which they were jealous. William Pitt, a patriotic young member of parliament who was just rising into note, and afterwards became the most eminent man in England, said, "It is now too apparent that this great, this powerful, this formidable kingdom is considered only a province to a despicable electorate." The king liked war, and he loved Hanover, so he hated Pitt for this saying. One of the politicians in this reign, who had succeeded Walpole as prime minister, summing up in a few words his own ideas about the foreign wars, called it "a noble ambition to knock the heads of the kings of Europe together, and jumble something out of it which may be of service to this country."

1741.
Foreign
wars.

6. The principal advantages which resulted to England out of the "jumble" were not in Europe at all, but in Asia and America. England had long possessed large colonies in America, but Canada, the part which at present belongs to us, was at that time colonized by the French. Our colonies were part of what

are now called the United States. Though those States are now a republic, they belonged to England, and were under the English kings and queens till about 100 years ago. Many of them are still called after those former rulers: Virginia after the virgin Queen Elizabeth; Maryland after Henrietta Maria, the wife of Charles I.; the Carolinas after Charles II.; New York after the Duke of York, James II.; Georgia after George II.

7. There were often disputes between the French and English colonies about the boundary lines. At last they came to open hostilities. The mother countries joined in the dispute, and there was soon war both in Europe and America. At first everything went very ill for England. Horace Walpole, the son of old Sir Robert, and one of the witty writers of the day, says in a letter to a friend, "If it were not for the life that is put into the town now and then by very bad news from abroad, one should be quite stupefied." Plenty of that "life" was put into the town. The French kept the upper hand in

1756.
Disasters. America, and in Europe the English lost the island of Minorca, which was considered a terrible disaster. So enraged were the people of England, that Admiral Byng, who had failed to relieve Minorca, was brought to trial. Though no charge could be brought against him, at the very worst, but that he had made a mistake, such as any man might have made, nothing would pacify the nation but his execution.

8. This cruel act, of course, brought no consolation and no remedy. Everything seemed to be going ill; the nation was utterly ashamed and disheartened; there seemed no one to be trusted, no one who could do anything, but the one man whom the king hated, William Pitt. "I am sure," he said, "that I can save the nation, and that no one else can." The nation was sure of it too, and the king was obliged to make him prime minister.

9. Pitt, who was afterwards created Earl of Chatham, was a man of wonderful genius; he was perhaps the greatest prime minister that England ever had. There was some-

1757.
William Pitt. thing grand and lofty about him which seemed to raise the spirit and character of the whole nation as much as Walpole had lowered it. He was a very poor man when he began life; his whole private fortune was about £100 a year; but he did not love money; he scorned bribes and corruption, and kept his hands and heart pure to the last day of his life. He had also a wonderful eloquence. Horace Walpole, after describing the fine speech of another great orator,

breaks off with "What could be beyond this? Nothing but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt." What so often happens if people, being fallen from a higher level to low, poor, worldly ways, see once more a noble example rise before them, happened now. The spirit of honour, disinterestedness, and self-sacrifice in one man kindled the same in those who beheld it. They began to feel the stirring of a nobler life within them. Pitt became the nation's idol. Englishmen woke up from their torpor, their love of selfish ease and profit; they showed once more a self-sacrifice, courage, and patriotism worthy of their fathers of old.

10. Now everything began to change. Pitt was skilful in choosing men. He did not appoint them only because of their age or rank, but according to their qualities. He sent a very gallant young general to Canada, James Wolfe, who quickly turned defeat into victory, but whose career was soon ended. In taking the city of Quebec from the French he fell mortally wounded, but he did not die till he heard the enemy were vanquished. "They run," he overheard some one say. "Who run?" asked the dying man, lifting himself up. When they told him it was the French, he sank down again, saying, "Then I die happy." His victory put an end to the French power in America, and gave to England that fine colony of which we are so proud. 1759. Canada.

11. It was Pitt's clear eye which perceived how to turn the noble qualities of the wild Highlanders to account. Since the rebellion of 1745 the chiefs of many of the clans had been sent into banishment, and the people were left as sheep without a shepherd. Their main ideas of life had always been devotion to their chiefs and love of fighting. Pitt formed two Highland regiments, which were soon some of the finest in the whole army. The soldiers became as devoted to their regiment as they used to be to their clan, and were as proud of fighting for king and country as they used to be of fighting against both. Scotland continually improved in civilization and prosperity, order and safety.

12. Soon too England began to lift up her head in India. The French and English were rivals there also. Neither had any dominion, but each had some commercial interests. There was a company in London called the East India Company, which had been established simply for trading purposes. They had some little settlements on different parts of the coast of India, consisting of a few square miles, for which they paid rent to the natives, and where the merchants lived. India.

These settlements had a few poor little forts, and a few soldiers to protect them. The merchants grew rich, but they never thought of wanting possession of the country.

13. The most important of these little establishments was at Madras. Not very far south, at Pondicherry, the French had a similar one. As the two countries at home were at war, the rival merchant settlements were soon at war too. Here also the French were successful at first, and the English were reduced to great danger and distress. It seemed as if all would

Clive. be lost, when Clive, a young merchant's clerk, who had been a great scapegrace in his youth, began to show such wonderful courage and genius that he was appointed to command the little English army. All his daring plans succeeded, to the amazement of French, English, and natives. The greater part of the natives in those parts, thinking the French were sure to be victorious, had taken part with them; but Clive with his handful of troops defeated them all. When he had completely triumphed in Madras he went north to Bengal. The nabob, or ruler of that province, had taken possession of a settlement which the English had at Calcutta, and had made himself for ever infamous by shutting up his prisoners in the den so well known now by the name of the Black Hole.

14. Clive was sent with a small army to punish the nabob. He had about 900 English troops and 1500 natives. The nabob's army consisted of nearly 60,000. "On this occasion," says Macaulay, "for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting, and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that if he had taken the advice of that council the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put everything to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river" which separated the English from their foe on the morrow.

15. The morrow came, the river was crossed, and in little more than an hour the nabob's great army was put to flight.

1757.

**Battle of
Plassey.**

This is called the Battle of Plassey. From that time the English gained ever more and more power and influence in India, till it has now almost entirely

passed into our possession. The earliest English rulers thought too much of growing rich, and plundered and oppressed the natives shamefully; but for a long time past England has to some extent, at least, striven to rule that great country for its own good; has given it wise laws, education, and justice; and there is good reason to hope that the people are happier and better cared for than they ever were under the native rulers, who, for the most part, were cruel and ignorant tyrants.

Thus the latter end of George's reign was very glorious for England. Horace Walpole no longer depends on bad news from abroad to put a little life into the town. "I don't know how the Romans did," he writes, "but I cannot support two victories every week. . . . One cannot take the trouble of sending every victory by itself. I stay till I have enough to make a packet, and then write to you." And again, "You would not know your own country. You left it a private little island living upon its means. You would find it the capital of the world."

16. Quite as wonderful a change took place in the religious feeling of the country. Since there had been safety and toleration, instead of danger and persecution, religion had rather fallen asleep. People had ceased to think so much about it, and it had become a sort of respectable and commonplace affair, in which no one was much interested, and with which very few but the middle classes concerned themselves at all. The higher ranks, from the king downwards, were very immoral; they laughed at the idea of being faithful husbands; they drank enormously, and no gentleman was ashamed of being seen intoxicated; they also swore frightfully. Grave, great, and heroic thoughts no longer occupied men's minds. The life of the upper classes in London at this time was hardly any better than it had been under Charles II.; and very different indeed from what it had been in the golden days of Elizabeth. In her time there had been grace and gallantry, wit and pleasure; but those were, as we may say, the ornaments and outside decorations of strong and brave character; the fair blossoming of a noble root. Sidney and Raleigh were men of high thoughts and high deeds, as well as gracious and accomplished gentlemen. During the eighteenth century there were gentlemen indeed, and very fine gentlemen, gay, witty, good-humoured, and charming; but those qualities were no longer the ornaments, they were the very best part of the man; underneath were carelessness, selfishness, frivolity, and too often heartless wickedness. One of the best and most brilliant of

State of
religion.

these fine gentlemen, the same Horace Walpole quoted above, when for once he paused in his gay career to think of his past and his future, wrote a few words which seem a more emphatic comment on that butterfly life than many sermons. "Nor can I well agree with Waller," he says, "that

'the soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new lights through chinks that time has made.'

Chinks, I am afraid there are, but instead of new lights I find nothing but darkness visible, that serves only to discover sights of woe. I look back through my chinks, I find errors, follies, faults; forward—old age and death, pleasures fleeting from me, no virtues succeeding to their place; *il faut avouer*, I want all my quicksilver to make such a background receive any other objects."

17. The very poor were about as bad, except that it was not their own fault. London and other cities had grown enormously during the last hundred years; trades and manufactures had been constantly increasing, and had drawn more and more inhabitants into the towns and ports. Though the population had increased so greatly, the Church had not taken much notice, or exerted itself to do anything for the good of these crowds of people. Very few new churches or schools were built; no one seemed to remember that what was enough for 1000 people was not enough for 10,000. But the great towns were soon more than ten times as populous as they had been 100 years before. The people grew frightfully ignorant, irreligious, and degraded. There were no Sunday schools and scarcely any day schools for the poor. Hardly any of them could read or write. Not long before this the custom of gin-drinking had come in. Before that they used to drink immense quantities of ale and beer. In his young days the celebrated Benjamin Franklin worked as a printer in an establishment in London, where about fifty men were employed. "The beer boy," he wrote afterwards, "had sufficient employment during the whole day in serving that house alone. My fellow pressman drank every day a pint of beer before breakfast, a pint with bread and cheese for breakfast, one between breakfast and dinner, one at dinner, one again about six o'clock in the afternoon, and another after he had finished his day's work. This custom," Franklin concludes, "appeared to me to be abominable." Still even all these pints of beer did not do them nearly as much harm as gin. It became a sort of passion with the people, and led, as it always does, to increased poverty, cruelty, and crime.

18. The amusements were low and brutal too; cock-fighting, bull-baiting, and other cruel sports were the delight of nearly all classes. There seemed a general coarseness and degradation, with but little care or feeling for anything higher. But now some clergymen of the Church of England, seeing how torpid and dead the respectable people were, how brutal and sinful the others, and their own hearts being fervent and loving, set themselves to wake the dead to life again. The principal of them was John Wesley, a truly noble and saintlike man; a man of high talent, and a good scholar. His great helpers were his brother Charles, who was a scholar too, and wrote some of our best hymns, and Whitefield, also a clergyman, and the most eloquent preacher of his time. If Whitefield did not draw iron tears down Pluto's cheek, he did what was perhaps harder—he drew gold out of the purse of a hard-headed American philosopher, the above-mentioned Franklin, who had made up his mind to give none; and carried Lord Chesterfield, the very type of a fine gentleman, so out of himself that he uttered an audible and excited exclamation in church.*

1738.
Wesley and
Whitefield.

19. Though some of the doctrines they taught were very harsh and dreadful, their hearts were much better than their doctrines. They were filled with that glowing love for the unseen God, the unseen Christ, which always lifts men up out of cold, worldly selfishness, and overflows into love and pity for man. The revival they brought about reminds us of the old days, and of work of the Grey and the Black Brothers in the warmth of their first love. These men toiled unceasingly to save the lost and

* "Franklin strongly disapproving of the scheme of building an orphanage in Georgia, . . . determined not to support it. 'I happened soon after,' he tells us, 'to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of this, and determined me to give the silver, and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all.'

"On one occasion, when illustrating the peril of sinners, he described with such an admirable power an old blind man, deserted by his dog, tottering feebly over the desolate moor, endeavouring in vain to feel his way with a staff, and gradually drawing nearer and nearer to the verge of a dizzy precipice, that when he arrived at the final catastrophe, no less a person than Lord Chesterfield lost all self-possession, and was heard audibly exclaiming, 'Good God! he is gone!'"—*Lucky's History of England in the Eighteenth Century.*

outcast. Their journeys, their fatigues, their preaching, their prayers were incessant. They never meant to leave the Church; all their desire was to breathe a new life into it; and if the Church of England had been wise she would have welcomed them, as the Pope had done St. Francis. But the Church was at that time what we call "High and Dry;" too respectable and conservative to put up with anything new, such as preaching and singing out of doors.

20. It must be owned that there was some excuse. The poor people to whom they preached grew so excited and wrought up that they sometimes fell into dreadful convulsions; some went mad; some died. They were very superstitious; they believed in witches; they saw visions; they dreamed dreams; they reverted to the old idea that God governed the world by perpetually interfering with the laws of nature, and were constantly telling of His miracles. Wesley himself, for example, gives the account of a girl who was always quite blind when she tried to read the Roman Catholic prayer-book, but could see plainly if she took up the New Testament.

They hated all amusements, even innocent ones, as much as William Langland and the Puritans.

21. Many of these exaggerations were only a sort of first effervescence, and passed away. They did a wonderful work which has not passed away. Soon after, and greatly through their influence, the Church of England itself began to revive, and to see that though decorum, tranquillity, and order are very good things, they are not the be-all and end-all of Christianity. A large number of the clergy, who were called in a sort of contempt by the honourable name of Evangelical, began to tread in the steps of Wesley, though not going to such extremes. Some of the most earnest and noble-hearted of the laity joined them. Their doctrines, like Wesley's, were many of them hard, bitter, and narrow, but, like his, their hearts were good. It was they or their friends and followers who began half the charitable works which sprang into life towards the end of the last century.

22. After George II. had slept with his fathers, and his grandson, George III., was reigning in his stead, not only in the Church, however, but throughout the country, men's hearts seemed to grow larger and warmer. They cared more and more for their fellow-creatures, and had an ever-increasing pity for the weak and the suffering. "I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me," their Master had said. They

longed that He should say that to them. Some went among the sick, and comforted them; others penetrated into those dens of misery, the prisons. Some cared for the children, and drew them into schools. Sunday schools were first thought of in 1780. The children were very coarse and rough and dirty; when a gentleman or lady tried to teach and help them it perhaps seemed a very hard and repulsive work; but as they sat among them, and saw how surprise and interest would kindle in their eyes, and warmth and sympathy would melt their wild young hearts, the teacher kindled and warmed too; duty was turned into love. Missionary Societies, Bible Societies, all sorts of ways for helping man were soon set on foot. The spirit was everywhere abroad, which led a poor woman to say, "Yes, I know we have given everything we can spare; but I want to give something which we can't spare."

LECTURE LIV.—THE ENGLISH GEORGE.

George III. The American colonies. Policy of England. Declaration of Independence. The slave trade. Wilberforce. The younger Pitt. The French Revolution.

1. GEORGE III. had the longest reign of any English sovereign, and a wonderful reign it was. He was not at all a clever man ;

1760. but for the greater part of the sixty years he wore the crown of England he was a very popular king. Many George III. of us must have known people who remembered him and his days. They always spoke of him with kindness and affection ; as "dear old George III.," "good old King George." Why was he so loved ? we ask ourselves, though he was dull, obstinate, blundering, undignified. One reason, doubtless, was that he was an Englishman, and gloried in being so ; for the nation had never loved its German kings. "This sovereign," said Walpole, "don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news ; he walks about, and speaks to everybody." But more than that, with all his defects he was a good man. He said he intended to introduce a new custom, "that of living well with all his family." Instead of deserting or slighting his wife, and leading an immoral life, as the other two Georges had done, he was a good, true husband, a loving father, a sincere Christian. He loved his church and his Bible. He it was who said he longed for every poor man in his dominion to be able to read his Bible and to have a Bible to read. He was honest, and if he was obstinate, it was because he always believed the things he wished were the right things. He was simple-minded and kind-hearted. He got up early and went to bed early, and lived a quiet, good, and religious life. In his later years he was sorely afflicted, for he grew blind and lost his reason.

2. One of his greatest comforts in those sad times was sacred music ; sometimes parts of Handel's beautiful oratorios. In one

of the last lucid intervals he had, Thackeray tells how he was found by the queen "singing a hymn, and accompanying himself on the harpsichord. When he had finished he knelt down and prayed aloud for her, and then for his family, and then for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself, that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity from him, but if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason again fled."

3. George III. had been better educated than his father, and as far as his lights went, was fond of literature and learned men. A love of books and of culture was more and more spread abroad. "Any man," says Dr. Johnson, "who wears a sword and a powdered wig," and that meant in those days every gentleman, "is ashamed to be illiterate." It was George who gave Dr. Johnson his pension of £300 a year.

Education
and art.

4. Not long afterwards he encouraged the founding of the Royal Academy of Arts. Through all these years, though cultivated Englishmen had been fond of pictures and statues, they had always been obliged to buy them abroad, or to employ foreigners to paint them in England. There were now, however, English artists who might stand, and not be ashamed, beside the greatest of the foreigners. The first president of the Royal Academy was Sir Joshua Reynolds. He and his friend and rival, Gainsborough, though they could paint as perfectly as the best of Italian artists, were generally content with painting portraits, or simple rural subjects. What they saw they painted beautifully: those men with the powdered wigs, who would have been ashamed to be illiterate; those lovely ladies, who look so stately and so innocent, and who still greet us, winter after winter, on the walls of the Royal Academy. 1768.

Towards the latter end of George's long reign, Turner, the greatest landscape painter whom England or the world has ever known, was beginning to open the eyes of men to the infinite glory and majesty of earth, and sea, and sky.

5. The greatest misfortune which happened to England during his reign was the loss of her American colonies; and that misfortune, it is impossible to deny, was in great part due to poor King George's inveterate obstinacy. The quarrel was caused by the tyranny of the mother country. Ever since the colonies had been founded they had been greatly hampered in their manufactures

Loss of the
American
colonies.

and their trade by the selfishness of England. It was an established principle that the interests of all colonies and dependencies were to be quite subservient to those of England.

6. If it was thought that any article which England produced or manufactured could be provided better or cheaper in a colony, the colonists, instead of being encouraged to make and sell it, were hindered in every possible way. For example, in America they had plenty of iron and plenty of wool, far more than they wanted for themselves, and which other countries would have been very glad of; but as the English also had wool and iron, the American colonies were not allowed to make theirs into useful things and sell them to any one who wanted them, because the English wished to force all other nations to buy wool and iron from no one but themselves.

7. The English treated Ireland just in the same way, preventing the Irish from selling what they had to those who would have been glad to buy it. They were discouraged from weaving either wool or linen. At one time they were forbidden to sell the meat, butter, and cheese, which their green, fertile land produced in great abundance, even in England, lest people might buy from them instead of from English farmers. England, in fact, reminds one of Bottom in the play, who, not content with his own part, wants to act everybody else's part too.

Hardly any one had yet begun to see that the more food and clothing and other useful things the earth produces, the better it is for all the inhabitants of the earth; and that if one country can produce one thing best, and another another, it is the wisest thing for them each to produce plenty, and to exchange it with one another as much and as often as they like, instead of hindering and thwarting each other by jealousy.

8. This selfish policy on the part of England alienated the hearts of the Americans, and helped on greatly in leading them to revolution. A still worse grievance was the taxation. The colonies knew very well that a main principle of the English constitution is that no tax can be imposed without the consent of the people taxed; that is to say, the consent of the representatives whom they choose to act and speak for them in parliament. Now the colonies had no one to speak for them in the English parliament; they sent no members there, but had a congress of their own, which laid on their taxes and attended to the local government. The English government, being now in great want of money, attempted to tax the colonies. Many

of the Americans were descended from the old Puritans, and were men of the same type as Pym and Hampden; they resisted, just as their forefathers would have done. They declared that they would not pay taxes which were imposed by a parliament in which they were not represented. One of the colonists, who already took a principal part in the affairs of the country, and who afterwards rose to **Washington**. be the leader of all, was George Washington. He was a man quite worthy to be placed beside Hampden in our thoughts; he was brave, persevering, truthful, and magnanimous. In all his after life he never sought or accepted anything for himself; all he thought of was justice for his country. He had too the clear eye of a commander, and knew how to march to his ends through trouble, and difficulty, and danger.

9. At first the Americans had no wish to separate themselves from England; they only demanded "the rights and privileges which are essential to the happiness of every free state." Lord Chatham, as Pitt was now called, and the wisest of the king's other counsellors, advised him to give in, and said that the Americans were right. "We are told," said Lord Chatham, "America is obstinate; America is in open rebellion; I rejoice that America has resisted." But George, who had all the makings of a despotic monarch in him, and who loved his own way as dearly as ever a Tudor or a Stuart had done, would not give in. It was firmly fixed in his mind, that if the Americans succeeded, all the other colonies would also be lost, and England would "reduce itself to a poor island indeed." He called the Americans rebels, and he called Lord Chatham's speech "a trumpet of sedition." He said that if the English were resolute, the Americans would "undoubtedly be very meek."

10. But the Americans were not meek at all, and they would not yield. One of the grievances had been about the importation of tea. The government had made a decree demanding a certain duty to be paid by the Americans on all the tea which they received from the mother country. The Americans, women as well as men, bound themselves to drink no tea at all sooner than pay that duty; and at last, when some English ships laden with tea arrived in Boston Harbour, a mob dressed up like wild Indians uttered a loud war-whoop, **1773**. boarded the ships, and flung all the chests of tea into the sea. Not long after this war was openly declared. It lasted ten years, and the end of it was that the colonies and their good cause

conquered, and they were declared independent of the mother country. When King George announced his consent to this declaration, he said very truly that in giving it he had sacrificed every consideration of his own to the wishes and opinion of the people. He added a prayer that neither might Great Britain nor America suffer from their separation, and that "religion, language, interest, affections" might prove a bond of union between the two countries; a prayer to which every year seems to bring a wider fulfilment.

11. This was an inglorious page in the history of England. A very few years after the Declaration of American Independence a great work was begun, which was as much to the honour of the country. It was in 1787 that a few wise and good men set themselves to make England worthy of being called free, and the champion of freedom, by abolishing the trade in negro slaves. The wickedness of trafficking in human flesh and blood had at length begun to be realized by English Christians. The hideous cruelties of the trade, the ghastly miseries and tortures endured by the kidnapped victims, added to the rising feeling. It was a lady who first saw or said

that pity and indignation were not enough; that half measures were of no avail, and that the whole matter ought to be laid before the House of Commons.

12. The charge of bringing the subject before parliament was given to William Wilberforce, one of the brightest and most ardent of the evangelical laymen, who, we may almost say, gave his whole noble life to that cause. The last letter the venerable John Wesley ever wrote was to Wilberforce, encouraging him in his holy war. Among all his helpers in the long battle, the most eminent was William Pitt, who was soon to be the

leading man in the kingdom. The great Lord Chatham was dead, and his son William inherited a large portion of his talents and character. He, like his father, was noble and grand in all his ideas, proud of his country, proud of himself. He was prime minister of England when he was twenty-four years old. He made his first speech in parliament when only twenty-one. There were splendid orators in the House of Commons in those days. One of them, Burke, was so astonished and delighted at the young man's speech, which reminded him of his father, that he burst into tears, saying, "It is not a chip of the old block; it is the old block itself."

13. Wilberforce himself tells us how he talked over the subject

of slavery with Pitt, who was his intimate friend. "I well remember," he writes, "after a conversation in the open air at the root of an old tree at Holwood, just above the steep descent into the vale of Keston, I resolved to give notice on a fit occasion in the House of Commons of my intention to bring the subject forward." In the beautiful spot where those two friends sate there is now a stone seat with an inscription, commemorating the conversation which led to such great results. The fight lasted for twenty years before Wilberforce and his allies succeeded. At the end of that time the British trade in slaves was put an end to. No more slaves could be torn from their homes, or sold in the market; but it was more than twenty years longer before slavery itself was abolished in every colony and dependency belonging to England. Not till then could it be boasted that the moment a slave sets foot on English soil he is free. In the very year that slavery was abolished William Wilberforce died. His heart was good to the last, and though his strength had failed, and his bright eye was dimmed, his interest in the cause never abated. It happened to be said in the old man's hearing that "at this moment, probably, the debate on slavery is just commencing," when he sprung from his chair, and with his clear voice startled his surrounding friends by enthusiastically exclaiming, "Hear, hear, hear."

1833.
Slavery
abolished.

14. Though England had lost a great part of her dominions in North America, she continued to spread abroad in other lands. She gained more and more of India, and the whole island of Ceylon; and she began to plant colonies in New Zealand, Australia, and Tasmania; all these are sometimes very well called "Greater Britain." Thus, though at the end of the many wars with France during all these reigns, both countries left off in Europe about as they had begun, neither of them being much larger or smaller; yet on the whole, looking at the map of the world, England had grown enormously, while France had scarcely grown at all. France is very clever at annexing, and attaching to her the people she annexes, which England is not; but she is not so clever at colonizing, or taking root in other lands; that is the great forte of England.

Greater
Britain.

15. Soon another and very serious war broke out with France. That country was now in a most deplorable state. The king and the aristocracy had long had their own way; it has been mentioned before how the trading classes and the peasantry were oppressed; how proud and cruel the nobles were; how careless and extravagant the court was; while the poor were ground down

to the earth. The clergy and the nobles paid no taxes; all the work and all the money were wrung out of the miserable, starving peasants. The English, half pitiful, half contemptuous, described the state of the French people in two words—"slavery and wooden shoes."

The very type and centre of oppression was the Bastille, a great prison fortress in Paris. The king could imprison any one he chose in its strong and gloomy dungeons without any trial, without even telling the victim what was his offence. A sealed letter from the king was enough to tear an innocent man from his home and happiness and bury him alive. The cruel nobles could easily get those sealed letters, and so rid themselves of any one who stood in their way. The English, strong in their own liberty, looked on with wondering indignation. Cowper, the gentlest of Christian poets, wrote thus of the Bastille:—

1785. "Ye horrid towers, the abode of broken hearts,
Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair,

There's not an English heart that would not leap
To hear that ye were fall'n." . . .

16. At last the French nation would bear it no longer, and the great Revolution began. Four years after Cowper's lines

were written the Bastille was stormed, and of those
1789. "dungeons and cages of despair" not one stone was
The French left upon another which was not thrown down.
Revolution.

How could England but rejoice when she saw France striving to obtain what she herself had so long enjoyed—liberty, justice, and protection for rich and poor?

17. We saw in a former lecture how the spirit of humanity had awakened of late. Even those who were less directly

religious in the ordinary sense were full of this generosity and enthusiasm. Of course, then, they felt
The feeling keenly for the French. The young poets of Eng-
of England.

land thought the Golden Age was coming, that henceforth all would be brothers. Wordsworth, who was living in France when the Revolution broke out, threw himself heart and soul into the cause, and indeed narrowly escaped being massacred. Coleridge burst out into glorious song.

"O ye loud waves! and O ye forests high!
And O ye clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising sun! thou blue rejoicing sky!
Yea, everything that is and will be free!

Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divines liberty.

"When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
Stamped her strong foot, and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared."

A preacher in London, carried away with joy, after thanking God that he had lived to see it, exclaimed, "I could almost say, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'" The statesmen of England felt a like thrill of generous sympathy. The more they gloried in their own constitution, and in the Revolution of 100 years before, which had secured it to them, the more they loved the liberty which was an Englishman's birthright, so much the more did they wish other countries to share in such blessings.

18. Pitt, who was now the foremost man in England, hoped great things from the Revolution; he expected to see France stand forth "as one of the most brilliant of European powers." Of the few who could approach him in genius and eloquence, the most notable were Fox and Burke. Fox was one of the most generous, affectionate, and noble-hearted of men. His private life, in his young days at least, was full of faults, and yet everybody loved him. His whole soul overflowed with pity for human sorrow and hatred of cruelty and oppression. When the Revolution began he cried enthusiastically, "How much is it the greatest event that ever happened in the world, and how much the best!"

Pitt and
Fox.

19. But after a year or two the French became so furious and committed such awful crimes that the English were horrified. The French king and queen, who in a vague way meant well, but were quite helpless in the face of a wild and raging nation, were dragged down the torrent and put to death. Innumerable people, many of them perfectly innocent, were massacred.

1792.

20. Now England began to shrink back. Burke, whose name was known through all Europe as the champion of freedom and justice, was appalled. He at first gazed with astonishment at the French struggle, hardly knowing whether to praise or blame. But he drew back aghast before all this brutality and savagery. The fate of the queen stirred his whole heart. He had seen her years before, when she first came to France, a beautiful young girl. "I saw her," he wrote, "just

Burke.

above the horizon, glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendour and joy. . . . I thought ten thousand swords would have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult." He saw in her fall the fall of "chivalry." In a sense he no doubt saw truly. That fatal flaw in chivalry which we noticed centuries ago in its palmy days, the sharp separation of classes, the honour to "ladies and gentlemen," the scorn of the poor, had gone on widening and widening, till the great crash came. "Never, never more," said Burke, "shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive even in servitude the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone. . . . Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal."

21. Were those sad words true? Was chivalry really dead? or was it soon to begin a higher and a wider life? Reverence for rank and birth might be abating, but surely a nobler and more manly reverence was arising. If, as Burke complained, "on this scheme of things a king is but a man," the new chivalry would see something to honour in every man; if "a queen is but a woman," the new chivalry would render homage to every woman. In every man and every woman, the poorest and the weakest, would be seen the trace of "the image of God."

22. Such hopes, or some such hopes, might have been in the minds of the French and of those who sympathized with them, but the terrible course which events took as the Revolution progressed soon smothered them all. Some of the lower and discontented people in England were still inclined to side with France, but they were put down and kept down by the strong hand. All the upper classes, all the middle classes, in fact, almost all England, were indignant and alarmed. The French Revolutionists, on their part, wanted to force their principles on all the world, and invited all nations to rise against their governments, and so England and France were soon at war again. Pitt hoped for peace to the last, but it could not be; the two countries were each longing for the combat, and though France

1793. War
declared. actually declared war, England was only too eager to accept it.

LECTURE LV.—THE LAST WAR WITH FRANCE.

The English sailors. Nelson. The Battle of Trafalgar. Napoleon Bonaparte. The Duke of Wellington. The Peninsular War. Waterloo.

1. PITT remained at the head of everything, but he did not know how to manage a war. Things went on very ill; the allies of England were not to be depended upon, and every one grew discontented. It was only at sea that England prospered. Our navy was, as it ever has been, the pride of the nation, and it was worthy of its old fame. The sailors indeed were very hardly treated. In those days men were pressed, or seized by force, to serve on the ships; but this custom has long been put an end to, and England is unlike the other countries of Europe in this, that no man is forced to be either soldier or sailor against his will. On board ship at that time the sailors had many grievances, and more than once they mutinied very seriously for better pay and better treatment.

2. But when they were in the face of the enemy they showed their gallant English hearts. The brave sailors had brave captains to lead them. The most famous of all was Lord Nelson, who won the two great battles of the Nile and Trafalgar. They say he had a bold, dauntless spirit from his infancy. When quite a young child he was lost in a thunder-storm; after he was found, and his friends asked him if he was not afraid, the little fellow answered, "Afraid! what does that mean?" He was as kind as he was brave. In the Battle of the Nile he was wounded, and carried off the deck to be attended to. The surgeon left a sailor whose wounds he was dressing, and turned to the admiral. But "No," said Nelson, "I will take my turn with my brave fellows." That was the sort of man sailors would live and die for.

1798.

Battle of
the Nile.

3. His last great victory saved England from the fear of a French.

invasion. They had planned to cross over the Straits, and had collected a great army of 100,000 men at Boulogne, within sight of our white cliffs. Three hundred thousand English volunteers sprang up to defend the native land, as they would spring up again to-morrow, if need were. And while the French were

**1805.
Battle of
Trafalgar.**

waiting for their fleet to come and protect the army as it crossed, Nelson pounced upon it at Trafalgar, conquered it, destroyed the power of France on the sea, and put an end to all fear of invasion.

4. One of Nelson's best officers, another English hero, was Collingwood; he too was gentle and generous as well as brave. "As one reads of him and his great comrade going into the victory with which their names are immortally connected," says Thackeray, "how the old English feeling comes up of what I should like to call Christian honour. What gentlemen they were! what great hearts they had! 'We can, my dear Coll,' writes Nelson to him, 'have no little jealousies; we have only one great object in view—that of meeting the enemy and getting a glorious peace for our country.' In the beginning of the battle, as Collingwood's ship was pressing alone into the midst of the enemy, Lord Nelson said to an officer near, 'See how that noble fellow Collingwood takes his ship into action; how I envy him!' The very same throb and impulse of heroic generosity was beating in Collingwood's honest bosom. As he led into the fight, he said, 'What would Nelson give to be here!'"

5. The second ship in Nelson's line was the "Fighting Temeraire." The glory and the fate of that ship have been written by Ruskin, and painted by Turner. When the fast-sailing "Victory," with Nelson on board, "drew upon herself all the enemy's fire," writes Ruskin, "the Temeraire tried to pass her, to take it in her stead, but Nelson himself hailed her to keep astern. The Temeraire cut away her studding sails, and held back, receiving the enemy's fire into her bows without returning a shot. Two hours later she lay with a French seventy-four gun ship on each side of her, both her prizes, one lashed to her mainmast and one to her anchor. . . . Surely if ever anything without a soul deserved honour and affection we owed them here."

The greatest painter whom England has ever produced saw that stately and beautiful ship "tugged to her last berth," and on the walls of the National Gallery we may see her too, in one of the most perfect and pathetic pictures he ever painted.

6. It was Nelson's last battle. He had given in it his famous

signal, "England expects every man to do his duty." As he stood on deck doing his, watching, cheering, and directing, he fell mortally wounded, and the joy and pride of England were darkened by that great loss. This victory was the last bright gleam of happiness in Pitt's life. An alliance or coalition which he had formed with Austria and Russia had failed. The French had won two great victories at Ulm and Austerlitz, and Pitt's heart was broken. As he lay dying, the watcher by his bedside tells that suddenly, "with a much clearer voice than he spoke in before, and in a tone which I shall never forget, he exclaimed, 'Oh, my country ! how I leave my country !' From that time he never spoke or moved." He died in the prime of his days, only forty-six years old.

1806.
Death of
Pitt.

7. Affairs in France had meanwhile altered very much. After the execution of the king a republic had been proclaimed, and it was decided that there should be no more kings or royal families in France. With royalty, religion, order, and everything else were swept away. One party after another came into power, each one putting its opponents, or even its lukewarm supporters, to death. For a time things were in so dreadful a condition that it was called the "Reign of Terror," at the head of which was Robespierre. This horrible rule, or misrule, could not last; and it happened in France somewhat as it had happened in England after the execution of Charles I., and as it often does happen when a tyrannical government is overthrown, and no one knows what to put in its place. It generally falls into the hands of some clever and fortunate soldier.

8. The most distinguished soldier in France was now Napoleon Bonaparte, who had risen into note during some of the wars of the French republic, and who by his wonderful talents and successes soon became the head of the army. Though for a long time he was the idol of the French nation, he was not exactly a Frenchman, but an Italian from Corsica, an island which France had annexed. Some of the innumerable ballads and songs which were made in England in defiance of him, and in encouragement of England, taunt him as the "Proud Corsican."

Napoleon
Bonaparte.

9. From being head of the army he became head of the nation; first he was called first consul, in imitation of the Roman republic, and afterwards emperor. He soon put an end to the tumults, cruelties, and disorders, restored the Christian religion, and issued some very good laws founded on the old Roman

1804.
He is called
emperor.

ones, which are called the Code Napoleon. Thus France was the gainer for the time, although he was quite as despotic as Cromwell had been. Unhappily he was very different from Cromwell in the way he treated foreign nations. Oliver had been quite satisfied to make the name of England honourable in the eyes of Europe, but Napoleon could by no means be content to do the same for France. Nothing would suffice him but being master of all Europe. He very nearly succeeded.

10. For fifteen years he set up kings and put them down pretty much at his pleasure. He took entire possession of the Netherlands, of a great part of Italy, of a great part of Germany. He set up his brothers, or his generals, who were dependent on him, in Spain, Naples, Holland, Sweden, and other places, so that these became only vassal states to France. Most of what remained were so weak and cowed as to lie almost at his feet.

11. The only country where freedom still lived was England ; and it was because Napoleon Bonaparte saw that if England fell all liberty would fall with her, that he became her deadly enemy. England, in return, hated him with an intense and fervent hatred. There were about 15,000,000 of inhabitants in England and 40,000,000 in France. Napoleon felt sure, and said so, that fifteen millions must give way to forty. Is it not enough to make an Englishman's heart glow to think how, when so many other great countries lay half dead, trampled by the tyrant's feet, this little island stood manfully confronting him, helped those other nations to rise, and finally crushed him and his arrogance for ever ?

12. Though our navy had been victorious in many engagements, our armies had at first been less successful. But as

Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington. Napoleon was rising to eminence in the French army, another young officer of just the same age was rising to eminence in the English—Arthur Wellesley, known to us now as the Duke of Wellington. He had begun by distinguishing himself in India ; when he came back to Europe he showed that he could cope with the great marshals of France. (He and Napoleon met for the first and last time at Waterloo.) His first great European war was in Spain, whither he was sent by the English government to help the Spaniards in driving out the usurping French, who had once more tried to make good the boast of Louis XIV., "There are no more Pyrenees."

13. This, which is called the Peninsular War, went on for six years ; and though Napoleon was not there, some of his best generals, who were nearly equal to himself, were in command of

the French troops. Wellington, aided by the Spaniards as far as they were able, gained many great victories and stormed some important towns, driving the French step by step before him, and at last forcing them out of the country. Then Wellington might have said on his part, "There are no Pyrenees." He followed the retreating enemy into their own land, and defeated them once more at Toulouse. 1814.

14. This was not the only misfortune which befell Napoleon at this time. He now began a tremendous quarrel with Russia, which he had hitherto left alone. He was so determined to ruin England that he had tried hard to hinder all nations from trading with her, and amongst others Russia; but as it would have done great injury to the Russians as well as the English to stop their commerce, he could not get them to agree to it. That and some other provocations drew Russia into the war, and Napoleon determined to invade the country with an immense army. This was the turn of the tide. It was an awful expedition. The cruel climate of Russia did the French armies almost more harm than the people did, though they were brave as heroes in defence of their country. They even burnt down their ancient city Moscow, to leave no refuge or protection for the invaders. What the poor French soldiers suffered from cold and starvation in their long retreat is heartrending to think of.

15. The people of Germany, Austria, and Sweden were beginning to lift their heads again, and to join together against their oppressors. And when Wellington and the English entered France from the south, and their allies entered it from the north, and marched into Paris, Bonaparte had to withdraw. He resigned his empire, and retired to the island of Elba, which, of his vast dominions, was all he was allowed to keep. Bonaparte retires to Elba.

16. He did not stay there long; the very next year he came back to France. The army which he had so often led to victory, which adored and was devoted to him, received him with open arms, and it seemed as if he would soon be as powerful as ever again. But the English and their allies were too much for him; they were resolved his tyranny should afflict the world no more. A great English army under the Duke of Wellington entered the Netherlands. A Prussian force under Marshal Blücher was sent to join him. Wellington had come to be called the Iron Duke now; Blücher was known by his soldiers as Marshal Vorwärts. The English encamped at Waterloo. 1815. Battle of Waterloo.

17. Napoleon was in high spirits ; he felt sure he was going to beat the English. It was a long battle—the greater part of a summer's day. The Prussians had not arrived, and could not arrive before evening. In the midst of the battle Napoleon thought he saw the English beginning to retreat ; he sent off a messenger galloping to Paris to say the field was won. Perhaps it was after this that he said, "These English do not know when they are beaten ; according to all the rules of war they have been beaten long ago, and yet they are fighting still !" The principal conflict was a deadly one between the French cavalry and the English infantry. The description of it reminds us of Wallace and the Battle of Falkirk, so many hundred years ago. It will be remembered how he first taught the poor men who fought on foot to stand against the proud knights on horseback ; how he formed his men in solid squares : the front ranks kneeling with their spears projecting like a bristling and solid hedge ; the archers inside with their arrows and long bows. Wellington formed his infantry on the same plan.

18. There were thirteen squares ; instead of archers in the middle they had cannon. The French cavalry, the cuirassiers, "12,000 strong," writes the historian Alison, "in great part clad in glittering armour, streamed up the slope in front of the English line, and with loud cries and unparalleled enthusiasm threw themselves on the squares." The infantry remained immovable ; they seemed rooted in the earth. The first rank, kneeling down, received the cuirassiers on their bayonets ; the second rank fired on them ; behind the second rank the gunners loaded their cannon ; the front of the square opened, a volley of grape-shot poured out, and the square closed again. The French poet, Victor Hugo, gives us his idea of the scene. "These squares were no longer battalions, they were craters ; these cuirassiers were no longer cavalry, they were a tempest. Each square was a volcano attacked by a storm-cloud. It was lava fighting against thunder." In the midst of it Wellington said to one of those unflinching regiments, "Stand fast, 95th ; we must not be beat ; what would they say of us in England ?" "Never fear, sir," they replied ; "we know our duty."

19. The hours went on, and still the Prussians did not come. At last Napoleon sent up his Old Guards, the Imperial Guard that had never been beaten. Up the hill they came, as if nothing on earth could resist them ; they drove back the line of English guns. But Wellington had got his Guards too—the Foot Guards, which

had not fought yet, and it was now evening. How they had chafed and longed to join in the battle ; but they had had to wait. The French did not know they were there ; they were lying down, four deep, hidden in a ditch. At last the moment came, and Wellington shouted, " Up, Guards, and at them ! " Up they sprang. From that moment the battle was decided. The French Guards, fighting gallantly, began to give way nevertheless. The English Guards slowly, irresistibly came forward, pushing the mass of French before them.

20. The Prussian aid arrived at last ; and now those immovable squares, which had stood like rocks fixed in the earth from morning till night, saw the duke ride to the front, wave his hat in the air, and order them forward. " With joyful step the whole line pressed forward as one man at the command of their chief, and the last rays of the sun gleamed on 50,000 men, who, with a shout which caused the very earth to shake, streamed over the summit of the hill. The French, who had believed that the British infantry was wholly destroyed, . . . were thunderstruck when they beheld this immense body advance majestically in line, driving before them the last column of the Imperial Guard. . . . Despair now seized upon the French soldiers ; they saw at once that all was lost, and horse, foot, and cannon, breaking their ranks, fled tumultuously."

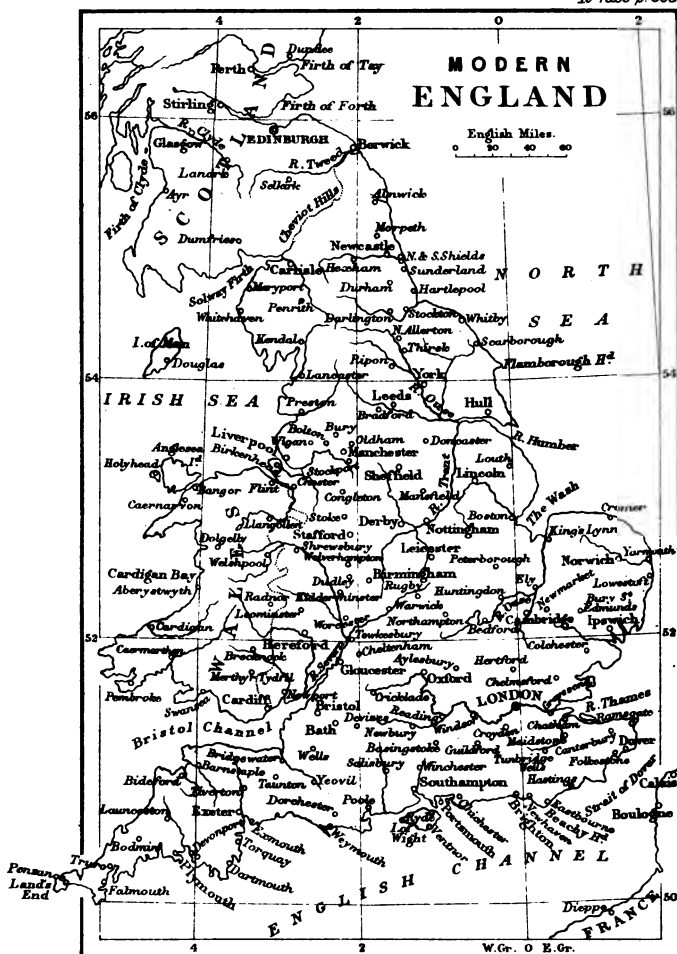
21. At last Napoleon himself fled also. But his brave Old Guard would not fly ; they formed themselves into four strong squares and stood firm. It was all in vain ; they were pierced through and through, cut down or made prisoners. There was never a more utter defeat.

Napoleon could do no more ; he yielded himself up to the English, who sent him to St. Helena, a solitary island in the Atlantic, where he died at last, having done no more injury to the world.

22. Whilst this grand fight was being fought at Waterloo the people of England were at church. It was Sunday, the eighteenth day of June. Old people used to tell, not long ago, how every one noticed the Psalms read on that day : the ninetieth, ninety-first, and ninety-second :—" Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another. . . . A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand ; but it shall not come nigh thee. . . . It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to praise Thy name, O most High."

23. That was the last, as well as the greatest, of our great battles with France. It was a long, long time before they could

forgive it. For many years they still hoped to avenge Waterloo. For many years Englishmen and Frenchmen looked on each other as natural enemies. But the anger and the pride and the jealousy have died away now, and the two countries, so near to each other, and having had so much to do with one another through all these centuries, are now warm friends, and from their hearts wish each other well. In the only great European war England has had anything to do with since that time, the French and the English stood side by side as trusty allies.



CONCLUSION.

1. WE have now come so near to our own times that it is hardly possible to write any more history. We know too much and too little.

We may have seen and heard many of the principal actors in what has taken place,—eminent men, eloquent men, talented and brave men,—and as yet we can hardly judge which of them were the true leaders of the time. We know, too, innumerable facts and events, but we cannot tell yet which of them are notable facts, that will greatly affect the future, and which of them were interesting only to ourselves.

2. In some respects it is evident that we have been carrying on the work of our forefathers; and in others it seems as if we have been striking out quite new paths, which will lead we know not whither.

3. We have learnt more and more of the value of religious liberty, and the injustice and folly of religious persecution. The Test and Corporation Acts (see p. 500) have been quite done away with. It is true that, long before, an Indemnity Act had been passed nearly every year, excusing Dissenting mayors, common council-men, and others from receiving the sacrament at church. But as no one likes to be perpetually forgiven and excused when he has done nothing wrong, it was a relief to them when the oppressive law was openly put an end to. Religious liberty.
1828.

In the following year Roman Catholics were permitted to enter parliament and to hold other offices without taking the oath of the royal supremacy, or declaring that they did not believe in transubstantiation. 1829.

Thirty years afterwards the oaths were altered so that Jews also might take their places in the House of Commons. 1859.

4. Changes of the same kind have also been made in the universities; and Dissenters, Catholics, and Jews may now

share in all the honours and privileges of those ancient seats of learning.

Thus we may now say that religious liberty is granted to all ; and when we remember how in old times men and women were burnt, tortured, imprisoned, fined, banished, only for worshipping God according to their own conscience, we may well be thankful for the days we live in.

5. At every one of these changes there was a great excitement, and many people believed they would be the beginning of dreadful evils and danger to the safety and religion of the country. But how has it turned out ? We are quite sure, at any rate, that the future historian of these times will not have to tell of such things as the histories of old times are full of—no Gunpowder Treasons, or Rye-House Plots, or fugitive Puritans. Why should Catholics, or Dissenters, or anybody else make plots, or intrigues, or flee from their country now ? They have all they need : they have liberty, protection, and respect ; they have a share in the government of their country ; and, naturally, they love that country better than they could do when they were kept down and suspected, if not punished and ill-treated. In this way England returns to the unity which she seemed to have lost at the Reformation.

6. In political matters too, as well as religious, we have gone on strengthening and widening the constitution by what are called Reform Bills—laws for enabling more and more of the people of the country to vote for members of parliament ; giving them, that is, a voice in laying on the taxes they will have to pay, and in making the laws they will have to obey. The evil condition of the House of Commons was mentioned before, and the unfair way in which members were elected. Both the Earl of Chatham and his son William Pitt had seen how necessary it was to reform all this ; to take away the “franchise,” as it is called, or the right of sending representatives to parliament, from the wretched little villages with few or no inhabitants, and to give it to large and populous places which sent none. But they were never able to achieve it ;

1832. it was not till long after they were both dead that the great Reform Bill was past.

7. These reforms caused a great deal of excitement and commotion. The people were bent upon having their rights, but the Conservative government, afraid of what they might do with them if they once got them, held back. Then the people broke out into riots and frightened them still

more. It is worthy of notice that in these conflicts the principal nobles who had possession of the miserable little "rotten boroughs" before described, and who had most of the unfair power in electing the members of parliament, were among the very first to see how unjust these privileges and powers were, and were among the greatest promoters of the rights of the people; while some of those who had begun by being poor men, but who had risen by their talents and industry to be powerful noblemen, were the most obstinate opponents of all reform.

8. After the passing of the Reform Bill the Conservatives were greatly afraid of what might be done by the new parliament, which was really elected by the people, instead of only partly by them, and partly by the nobles and the government. They thought we should have a revolution, and be as miserable perhaps as France had been. But they were mistaken; instead of becoming more rebellious when they had got justice, they became, as Englishmen naturally are, peaceable, obedient, and law-abiding.

9. There were some alarms once or twice. The people wanted some more privileges than they had yet got, and they banded together to demand another "charter" in which these should be granted them. Some of these were quite reasonable things, and others may be so in due course; but the Chartists, as they were called from their Charter, set about obtaining them in a wrong-headed manner. They intended to present a petition to parliament, which they had a full right to do; but instead of presenting it in the usual quiet manner, they assembled in an immense body to carry it to the House themselves. This was clearly intended to overawe and frighten the members, and prevent them from acting according to their own free judgment. Therefore they were not allowed to enter London in procession as they had intended; but every one was very anxious there should be no fighting, and no soldiers employed. Nearly all the gentlemen and tradesmen of London came forward to act as special constables, and the soldiers, who were in readiness to use force if it were necessary, were hidden out of sight so as to provoke no one. There was no fighting; hardly any disorder; no Wat Tyler nor Jack Cade was put to death this time. The crowds went quietly home again; and by being patient they have gradually obtained much of what they asked for in a peaceable and lawful manner. In 1867 the Conservatives themselves passed another Reform Bill, extending the right of voting to still more of the people.

1848. The
Chartists.

1867.

10. The worst part of all English history has been the treatment of Ireland. From the days of Henry II. onward to the days of Elizabeth, when Spenser wrote of that "most

Ireland. beautiful and sweet country as any under heaven ; " from the days of Elizabeth almost to our own days, we might still say as he did, " I do much pity that sweet land, to be subject to so many evils, as every day I see more and more thrown upon her." It has almost always been, "Ireland was in disorder; Ireland was rebelling." People do not, as a rule, rebel when they are happy and well-treated ; and when we read this over and over again we naturally ask, Why? Unhappily the answer is not far to seek. That the Irish were wild and turbulent, that they were often treacherous and cruel, is undeniable, but that the English were tyrannical, oppressive, and unjust is quite as undeniable.

1801. Ireland was, as it was called, united to England in 1801; it ceased to have its own parliament, and, **Union with England.** instead, sent members to the English parliament.

But the union was really disunion, and the Irish, if possible, hated the English still more than before. England has now for many years past striven to undo her evil work of old. She has disendowed the Protestant Church, which was not the Church of the people, but had been violently forced upon them, and she has sought in every way to do justice, and promote the peace and welfare of the country ; but though England has now quite ceased to oppress, Ireland has not yet forgotten her old oppression, and the " United Kingdom " is not so thoroughly " at unity with itself " as we may hope it will be as time rolls on.

11. One of the most important changes that has been made for the good of the whole kingdom is the repeal of the Corn Laws.

1846.
**Repeal of
the Corn
Laws.**

According to the ideas which had prevailed up till this time, Englishmen were bound to have no corn, or as little as possible, except what their own land could produce. This was considered to be good, not only for the farmers and landlords, but for the whole country ; and it was said that if we had corn from foreign parts we should become poor dependents on those parts. But as England is a small country compared with the great numbers of people who live in it, it could not produce corn enough to feed them all. Bread was sometimes dreadfully dear, so that the poor were half starving ; while other countries had a great deal more corn than they wanted, which they would have been glad to send to us in exchange for other things which we could give them. The Conservatives were averse to making any change, but there

were zealous and wise men in the country who saw that it would be right, and determined that it must be done.

12. None of these changes were brought about without hard labour and toil ; and when we are enjoying the fruit of that toil, we ought to have sometimes a grateful thought of those who won it for us. In the midst of the struggle a heavy sorrow came upon one of the leaders. He lost his wife, who was dearer to him, perhaps, than his own life. It seemed as if the blow must paralyze him, and leave him no heart or spirit for labour. Then one of his friends went to condole with him. He knew he could not comfort him, or bring back what he had lost ; but he thought he could turn his sorrow into a noble resolve. He bade him remember in his pain how many other men, his fellow-countrymen, were suffering the like ; how many were mourning for wife and child, needlessly torn from them, not by sickness or accident, but by sheer hunger ; how much agony and sorrow there was all round which might have been saved by cheap bread. And then, if he was not comforted, he was roused. He " had compassion on the multitude, because they had nothing to eat," and, made stronger by sorrow, he joined the fight once more, and never rested till it was won.

13. Another change has been the invention or improving of machinery and the steam-engine. Innumerable things which used to be done by hand are now done by machines. **Machinery.** This seems as if it must save a great deal of human labour, and produce a great many more useful things ; and so it certainly does ; but whether the change is, on the whole, for the happiness and improvement of man no one can say. Work that used to be done quietly at home, a woman spinning at her door, a man weaving at his own little loom, work too in which the workers might take an honest pride and pleasure, is now done in enormous factories, where people are gathered together for their long day's labour ; men here, women there, children elsewhere. This must certainly have a great effect on their characters and thoughts ; but we are too much in the midst of it as yet to judge what that effect will be.

14. A still greater change is in the spread of education. Ever since the beginning of this century the different religious bodies, the Church and the Dissenters, had founded schools **Education.** for the poor ; and though this was thought at first, by many people, a very wrong and dangerous thing to do, it is now felt by everybody to be a duty. The government first began by helping the schools which had been founded by voluntary efforts ;

more lately school boards have been established, which build other schools when those already in a neighbourhood do not suffice, and which also employ people to look for the little wild children of the streets and compel them to come in. Here is indeed a contrast to the old days when a serf was hindered from having his child taught to read or write! What the result will be no one can foretell. We are sure that as the life which surrounds a man will be different from that which surrounded his grandfather, so will he himself be different in his thoughts and hope from the thoughts and hope of his grandfather.

15. We may be almost certain that as he is more educated he will be more gentle. Looking back on the past, we see the gradual growth of sympathy, which will surely not cease to grow. In former days the rich and noble looked with careless scorn on the poor of their own land; they were "rascals," "villeins," bought and sold like horses and sheep. In former days the Englishman hated all foreigners, looking on them as his natural enemies, and always longing to be fighting them. The races of men which he considered, or which, perhaps, really were inferior to his own, he despised, and treated as hardly human. The American Indians were "tawny pagans," "grim salvages," and "rabid wolves." It was no more sin to kill an Irishman than to kill a dog; no more wrong to enslave a negro than to yoke an ox. Against men of other religions his scorn and hatred went hand in hand. It was a glorious deed to slay a Turk or a Jew; it was doing God service to burn a Protestant or mutilate a Puritan. The lower animals had neither rights nor claims; they were mere tools to be worn out in working for man, or tortured for his amusement.

That all this is history now, that it has all vanished out of our daily life and thoughts, we are far indeed from saying; but that it is passing away, that much of it has already passed away, we are quite sure. If it were not so, we should be ready to say in despair, "Then has Christ died in vain." The struggle is still going on between selfishness and love. In the page we are adding to the history of England it is for us to determine of which there shall be recorded the victory.

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